













THE ROMANCE OF  
AMERICAN EXPANSION

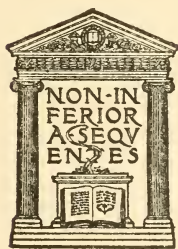


# THE ROMANCE OF AMERICAN EXPANSION

BY  
H. ADDINGTON BRUCE

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*ILLUSTRATED*



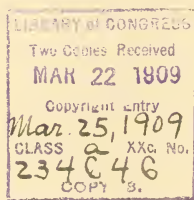
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To

MY WIFE

TO WHOSE STIMULATING COUNSEL AND  
DISCRIMINATING CRITICISM THIS  
VOLUME, LIKE ALL MY  
LITERARY ENDEAVOR,  
OWES MUCH



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## PREFACE

THE aim of this volume is to give a brief, yet sufficiently comprehensive, account of the territorial growth of the United States, with especial reference to the achievements of the men — Daniel Boone, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Sam Houston, Thomas Hart Benton, John Charles Fremont, William Henry Seward, and William McKinley — who were pre-eminent among their contemporaries in each of the forward steps in the movement from sea to sea. By thus emphasizing the personal element it is hoped not merely to enhance the interest of the narrative, but still more to afford a clear view of the true nature of the American advance.

It was no fortuitous development. Its roots struck back to the early colonization of America, and it was the logical result of the genesis, on a largely unoccupied continent, of an exceptionally virile, progressive, and ambitious nation. The instincts and needs of that nation irresistibly impelled it to territorial enlargement. It did not always

expand without conflict with other nations. Yet its record, however sharply scrutinized, is singularly free from blemish. Even the so-called spoliation of Mexico proves, on close examination, by no means so blameworthy as has generally been believed. From beginning to end there is little to regret and much to admire in the story of American expansion.

Those who desire to make a more detailed study than is possible here, are advised to consult the works enumerated in the critical bibliography contained in the closing chapter. Without attempting to cover the subject fully — a really impossible task in view of the immensity of its literature — an effort has been made to include some mention of all the most helpful and generally accessible publications relating to the different acquisitions. References will also be found to biographies and other books dealing with the lives of the men who were most conspicuously associated with these acquisitions as leaders and instruments in executing the national will.

This work, I should add, was originally prepared for publication as a serial in *The Outlook*, and I am under a special debt of gratitude to the editors of that periodical for permission to reproduce a num-

ber of the excellent illustrations which were used in connection with its serial publication. I also wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Prof. Edward Channing, of Harvard University, for helpful suggestions; to Mr. Charles G. Bennett, Secretary of the United States Senate, for generously providing me with necessary documents; and to the officials of Harvard University Library, particularly Mr. Thomas J. Kiernan, for kindly and cordial co-operation in placing at my disposal Harvard's rich collection of source material for the study of American history.

H. ADDINGTON BRUCE.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

*February, 1909.*



# THE ROMANCE OF AMERICAN EXPANSION

## CHAPTER I

### DANIEL BOONE AND THE OPENING UP OF THE WEST

FROM the strictly political point of view, the story of the territorial expansion of the United States begins with the Louisiana Purchase, the first acquisition of new land by the youthful Republic. But precedent to the Louisiana Purchase, and rendering it inevitable, was an earlier movement set on foot while as yet the United States existed only in the imagination of a few prophetic souls who looked forward with buoyant hopes to the moment when the British colonies in the New World might become free to work out their destiny for themselves. From this movement, indeed, resulted not only the Louisiana Purchase, but all those other forward steps by which, within the space of less than a century, the American people obtained dominion from ocean to ocean; and in this movement is to be found, in no small measure, the explanation of the unparalleled rapidity with which the

vast intervening territory was settled and developed. If it gave an irresistible impulse to territorial extension, it likewise quickened and strengthened national characteristics without which territorial extension would not have been worth while. Knowledge of it is indispensable to a correct understanding of the country's growth.

It began, roughly speaking, about the middle of the eighteenth century. Then, for the first time and after more than one hundred and fifty years of occupation, the colonists whose homes dotted the coastal region from Canada to the Floridas bent their way to the mysterious and unknown wilderness lying beyond the mountains that had so long marked their western boundary. Hitherto they had felt neither need nor desire to pass the barrier thrown up by nature; had, rather, clung instinctively to the narrow strip of land bordering the watery waste that separated them from the mother country. Here they had made clearings, created farm and plantation, built cabin and fort, village and town, always within easy reach if not within sight and sound of the sea. But now, under the pressure of economic stress and the hidden yet all-powerful influence of environment, they had acquired new standpoints, new yearnings, new char-

acteristics. Long years of successful battling with the forest and the savage had bred in them alertness, resourcefulness, self-reliance, and boundless optimism. Although they could not know it, the New World had given birth to a new nation. They chafed under the limitations imposed by the home Government, they chafed still more under the limitations of a territory which they had outgrown. Thence, as the spirit of independence and daring increased, arose the determination to press forward and master and occupy the transmontane wilderness. It mattered not that this was the home of warlike tribes who would be certain to contest their coming. Passage of the mountains and possession of the country beyond they must have. They only awaited a pilot to point out the way.

Such a pilot they found in Daniel Boone. Boone, it is true, was by no means the first American to cross the mountains and explore the fertile Mississippi Valley.\* But it was not until he opened the famous Wilderness Road that any systematic attempt at migration and colonization was made.

\* The names of the most important of Boone's predecessors will be found in R. G. Thwaites's "France in America" (vol. VII, p. 40, of the "American Nation" co-operative history of the United States), and in the same author's "Daniel Boone," pp. 85-88. A useful work on this subject is J. S. Johnston's "First Explorations of Kentucky," issued as No. 13 of the Filson Club's publications.

Then, as by magic, a great tide of humanity surged forward, following the channel he had cut, and, after an outward rush of hundreds of miles, spreading itself through the timber-lands and grass-lands of what has since become known to us as the Middle West. By this hard and narrow path, so narrow that he who traversed it must do so afoot or on horseback, the immigrants poured in; and, other currents presently setting by mountain pass and river route, the entire valley, formerly the habitat of the roving red man, soon echoed to the ring of the woodsman's ax, heralding the establishment of civilization. Here was an expansion movement in the best sense of the term. Not rashful venturing or crude lust for gold had prompted the mighty exodus, but an all-absorbing desire to settle and cultivate and upbuild. Cleaving steadfastly to this ideal, the colonists, like their fathers before them, and overcoming even greater obstacles, labored so manfully and so wisely that, long before the death of their pathfinder, the rich region to which his Wilderness Road gave access had become the seat of prosperous commonwealths, partners in the Union born of the heroic War for Independence.

All this Boone saw, in all this he shared, and not without reason did he declare in his old age that the



DANIEL BOONE  
From the statue by Enid Yandell.



history of the settlement of the western country was his history. His entire career mirrored faithfully the sentiments, the sacrifices, the vicissitudes of the empire-builders to whom he opened the gateway to the Mississippi; and from his earliest youth he was an incarnation of the restless longing, the eager daring, the unconquerable resolution, and the sublime faith that carried the sons of those empire-builders from the Mississippi to the Pacific and beyond. By birth, training, and environment he was well fitted for the great task to which destiny had appointed him. Born of a pioneer Pennsylvania family, he first saw the light of day in a frontier settlement.\* He was cradled to the whispering of the forest trees and the singing of the birds that flitted through their branches; and from the moment that he was old enough to walk, the forest never called to him in vain. As a boy it was his delight to wander from the open fields, past the cordon of blackened stumps that marked the edge of the clearing, and on into the primeval depths, there to study the ways of nature and lay the foun-

\* Boone was the son of Squire and Sarah Boone, both of whom were Quakers, his father being an emigrant from Devonshire, his mother of Welsh extraction. He was born (November 2, 1734) in the township of Oley, Berks County, on a farm a few miles from the present city of Reading, and was the fourth son and sixth child in a family of eleven children.

dations of his after mastery of woodcraft. As a boy, too, he became an adept with the rifle, and soon assumed the congenial task of supplying the family with meat. Herding in the summer, hunting in the winter, each succeeding year left him more keen, more self-reliant, more vigorous, and more enamored of the joys of the open.

A new chapter, but not unlike the old, began when, at the age of eighteen, he migrated with his parents to the fair lands of the Yadkin Valley in the northwest corner of North Carolina. Here were fertile fields for farming, luxuriant meadows for grazing, and a wilderness with an abundance and a variety of game that far exceeded Boone's experience in the older country. Here, also, as he soon discovered, was the material for romance, and, with an ardor that could not be gainsaid, he wooed the maiden of his choice.\* But life was not all hunting,

\* Boone's wife was Rebecca Bryan, a daughter of Joseph Bryan, who, like the Boones, had migrated from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. Boone was twenty-one and Rebecca seventeen when they were married, and an interesting description of their appearance at the time of their wedding is quoted by Dr. Thwaites from an account written by a border historian who had made a close study of the family traditions: "Behold that young man exhibiting such unusual firmness and energy of character, five feet eight inches in height, with broad chest and shoulders, his form gradually tapering downward to his extremities; his hair moderately black; blue eyes arched with yellowish eyebrows; his lips thin, with a mouth peculiarly wide; a countenance fair and ruddy, with a nose a little bordering on the Roman order. Such was Daniel Boone,

dancing, love-making. Sterner duties had to be performed. There was the necessity of breadwinning, and there was the necessity of guarding the cabin home from the sudden attack of the Indian roused at last to fury by the wily counsels of his French allies. The war-cloud that for seven years was to engulf the continent had already begun to gather, and with an anxious eye Boone and his fellows watched its approach. The news that the French were drawing nearer, were even building forts on land claimed by the British colonies, grated harshly on their ears; and when the more welcome tidings came that a punitive expedition was to set forth, there was no lack of volunteers.

Thus it happened that Braddock's ill-fated army, which held in its ranks the immortal Washington, held another great American, Daniel Boone. And Boone, like Washington, survived the carnage of

now past twenty-one, presenting altogether a noble, manly, prepossessing appearance. . . . Rebecca Bryan, whose brow had now been fanned by the breezes of seventeen summers, was, like Rebecca of old, 'very fair to look upon,' with jet-black hair and eyes, complexion rather dark, and something over the common size of her sex; her whole demeanor expressive of her childlike artlessness, pleasing in her address, and unaffectedly kind in all her deportment. Never was there a more gentle, forbearing creature than this same youthful bride of the Yadkin." (From R. G. Thwaites's "Daniel Boone," pp. 25-26.) Rebecca Boone brought up a large family of children, faithfully followed her husband in his many wanderings, and may well be regarded as a typical mother of the early West.

that fearful day. Out of his baptism of fire he emerged a man, with all the trivialities of youth put far behind him. The year after Braddock's defeat saw him active in the futile defense of the frontier posts, now threatened by the Indians of the South. One by one the settlements were deserted, as the backwoods folk gradually lost hope and fled to the communities nearer the sea; and in time, though not until their case seemed desperate, the Boones fled too, locating in tide-water Virginia. Then, as the war still raged, the husband and father — for such Boone now was — hurried back to the wilderness, reaching it in time to take part in the campaign that compelled the Indians to sue for peace. His had been a bloody apprenticeship, but no less than the youthful years of roving it served him well for the work he was yet to do.

On this work he did not definitely enter until six years after the great war had come to an end and the pretensions of France to New World supremacy had been forever blotted out by the battle of Quebec. Meanwhile, having brought his family back to the Yadkin, he spent his time much as of old, farming and hunting. But now his hunts were longer than before. The pressing of the frontier towards the mountains, the clearing of the forest, and the

increased number of those who joined in the chase, had driven the denizens of the wilds to take refuge with their remoter brethren on the far side of the rocky fastnesses. To the dauntless Boone, however, the new difficulties and perils only added to the joys of hunting. Peak after peak he scaled, and the farther the game retreated the farther he pursued, only returning when his rifle had won him a goodly store of meat and furs. Unconsciously, but inevitably, he became inspired with the curiosity and enthusiasm of the explorer. As ridge upon ridge and forest after forest unfolded before him in glorious panorama, there rose unbidden the question of what lay beyond and the spontaneous but overpowering desire to go and find.

It needed only a gentle stimulus to send him on a journey of discovery, and this stimulus was supplied by the arrival in the Yadkin Valley of a whilom fur trader, John Finley, or Findlay, who in years gone by had ranged all through the hidden land. To Boone and his scarcely less eager neighbors Finley described a country — which he called Kentucky — watered by magnificent streams, garbed in a marvelously luxurious herbage, splendidly timbered, and abounding in all sorts of game. It was, to be sure, a dark and bloody ground, a no-man's

land, over which hostile tribes hunted and warred. But its exploration would well repay the risks involved, and he assured them that he knew a path leading to it — a path scarce deserving of the name, but still a path. Now followed days and nights of story-telling and discussion, and soon a little band of frontiersmen — only six, including Finley — had pledged themselves to make the long pilgrimage.

May Day, 1769 — a date memorable in the annals of American expansion — they left their homes, and, crossing in turn the Blue Ridge and Stone and Iron Mountains, made their way to Powell's Valley, at that time the farthest limit of white habitation. Thence, under Finley's skilful guidance, they passed to Cumberland Gap, and through the gap by a hunter's trail, which finally brought them to the so-called warrior's trail. Following this, and journeying leisurely, they reached a small tributary of the Kentucky River, and here — perhaps because of the beauty of the surrounding country — they established their camp. Boone's autobiography, dictated, in substance if not in form, to the Kentucky historian, John Filson, is rich in passages revealing the profound impression made on him and his fellows by the novelty and picturesqueness of the scenes

in which the party found themselves.\* But they were not sentimentalists. They were rugged, hardy backwoodsmen, who had come to hunt and explore. And they were speedily disillusioned of any idea that the western paradise was without its evils.

Hunting one day with his brother-in-law, John Stuart, Boone was surprised by a band of Shawnee Indians, and, with Stuart, was compelled to lead them to the camp, where the others were likewise made prisoners. Everything they possessed — horses, rifles, ammunition, furs, supplies — was taken from them, and they were then released with just enough provisions to carry them back to the settlements. They were warned that they were trespassers in a country which belonged exclusively to the red men, and that did they venture into it again their lives would pay the penalty. To most of them the hint was quite sufficient and they hur-

\* For instance, Filson records Boone as saying: "One day I undertook a tour through the country, and the diversity and beauties of nature I met with in this charming season, expelled every gloomy and vexatious thought. Just at the close of day the gentle gales retired and left the place to the disposal of a profound calm. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge, and, looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tracts below. . . . In such a diversity it was impossible I should be disposed to melancholy. No populous city, with all the varieties of commerce and stately structures, could afford so much pleasure to my mind as the beauties of nature I found here."

riedly started East, but Boone and Stuart, enraged at the thought of going home empty-handed, refused to accompany the others, trailed the Shawnees, and actually succeeded in recovering some of their property. Now, however, they in their turn were trailed and once more captured. An anxious week followed before Boone's native cunning contrived a way of escape.

Even then he lingered in Kentucky, nothing daunted by the flight of Finley and the rest, nor by the tragic death of Stuart, shot soon afterwards by some lurking Indian. Without so much as a dog to bear him company he still roved and hunted and explored. For him solitude in the wilderness held no terrors; to him, as he trod the verdant carpet beneath the arching trees, it was no wilderness, but a land of promise. Already, we may easily imagine, he had reached the resolution to recross the distant mountains only for the purpose of bringing out his wife and children and carving for them a new home in this pleasant country where all nature seemed to smile. True prototype of the bold individualism that had already entered into the American blood, he felt an abiding self-confidence and independence, and asked no odds of any man. What though the farthest bound of civilization lay

far behind him? It must surely be advanced, and he would advance not with but before it.

Willingly would we follow this unlettered, rough, uncouth, leather-stockinged forerunner of the coming age in his solitary wanderings and in the adventures that befell him, when, having returned to the Yadkin, he found himself involved in another Indian war. But we must hasten to the moment of his reappearance in Kentucky, no longer as a member of a small exploring party, but as guide to a determined company of pioneers.\* It was fitting, in truth, that the palisaded settlement which they located near the Kentucky River should be named Boonesborough; and fitting also that, as he often proudly asserted, his wife and daughters should be the first white women to stand on the banks of that stream.

He had, however, brought his loved ones to a life far harder than even the stern existence that had

\* It was then (March-April, 1775) that the Wilderness Road was opened by Boone and a party of thirty expert woodsmen whom he had engaged in the interest of the Transylvania Company, organized by a number of wealthy North Carolinians for the purpose of colonizing Kentucky. One of the party, Felix Walker, has left a statement giving a brief account of the building of the famous road, and showing plainly the hardships and perils overcome by the roadmakers. This statement is printed as an appendix to George W. Ranck's "Boonesborough," one of the best of the exceedingly useful Filson Club publications. See also Thomas Speed's "The Wilderness Road," and A. B. Hulbert's "Boone's Wilderness Road."

been their lot before. "Brothers," said one of the chieftains with whom the settlers had bargained for their land, "it is a goodly country we give you, but we fear you will not find it easy to hold." This prediction was justified from the outset. Added to the natural difficulties incidental to the occupation of a virgin territory was the implacable hostility of the tribes who with reason feared this invasion of their hunting grounds. Boonesborough, like the other settlements now forming, was soon a center of savage warfare. The colonist, venturing from the shelter of the friendly stockade, did so with the knowledge that his life might be the price of his daring. The woods about teemed with red men, who, fortunately for the pioneers, lacked the strategic power that would have given them easy mastery. As it was, and despite this ever-present menace, the men from the East not merely held their ground, but steadily received recruits ready, like themselves, to face all perils for the sake of a home where, as Boone tersely phrased it, they would have elbow room and breathing space.

It is a grim but not wholly unattractive picture that has come down to us of the life the pathfinder and his comrades led, and a picture that affords a clearer understanding of the results that have flowed

from this eighteenth-century migration. It was not all hunting and fighting, although hunting and fighting were long its most conspicuous elements. There were times, which became more frequent and of greater duration as the colonies were strengthened, when the Indian withdrew completely; and in such times the work of cultivation went on apace. So soon as safety permitted, and often before it was really safe, there were dispersals from the parent settlements. It was every man's ambition to have a piece of land that he could call his own; and, being usually an agriculturist, it was his desire to have at least as large a holding as he and his children could work. Under the powerful stimulation of this twofold ideal of owning and working, great openings appeared where before had been unbroken forest, and the haunts of the buffalo and the deer were transformed into plowed fields and profitable pastures. Resting his rifle against a convenient stump, eye and ear alert for the least untoward sight or sound, the pioneer pressed the advantage his hardihood had gained. And in his labors, as in his simple joys, his wife and sons and daughters bore their part.

Thus was born and fostered an even more intense spirit of independence and individualism than had

been developed in the coastal days — days, indeed, resembling these, but infinitely less trying. Then the pioneer always had at his back the familiar sea, on which he could rely did the elements or man render his position untenable. Now he had put the sea far behind him, while between him and it lay a mountain wall and hundreds of miles of well-nigh impassable wilderness. Small wonder that, taking account of the dangers passed and the obstacles conquered, his confidence in himself increased and, dimly enough at first, he began to crave further tests of his power. But, be it observed, his self-containedness and self-reliance were not accompanied by any loss of the social sentiment. On the contrary, in his rude settlements there was a greater solidarity of interests than more advanced communities can boast. The consciousness of isolation, if nothing else, tended to draw the people closer together. Was there a cabin to be built, willing hands united to lighten the burden. Was there a crop to be harvested, corn to be husked, a merry party quickly came together. Was there a death to be mourned, a grave dug, rough but kindly voices condoled with the bereaved, strong arms gently lowered the old friend to his last sleeping-place. And did the Indian threaten, swift riders

galloped from farm to farm, warning their inhabitants to find safety in the communal stockade.

Such alarms grew frequent with the outbreak of the War for Independence, and the subsequent invasion of the Kentucky country by the Indian allies of the British. Nor did respite come until George Rogers Clark executed his magnificent project of conquering the posts in the northwest. Boone did not follow Clark and his devoted little army of backwoodsmen, for the sufficient reason that he was at the time a prisoner in the hands of the Indians. With some thirty other Kentuckians, he had been taken captive at the Licking River, whither he had gone to make the salt of which his settlement stood in sore need. Happily, his reputation as a hunter and fighter insured him kind treatment. More than this, it earned for him, though much against his will, the high honor of adoption into the tribe by which he had been taken captive. Nothing in Boone's altogether astonishing career is more remarkable than the course he now pursued. The art of concealment had not been the least of the acquisitions of his long years of adventure, and with every outward sign of delight and enthusiasm he submitted to the painful ceremonies by which his white blood was "washed out" and his

transformation into a full-fledged warrior effected. Soon, so successful was he in dissembling his true feelings, his captors came to regard him with a real affection. He hunted with them, smoked with them, feasted with them, in the paint and regalia of a veritable brave. But all the time his heart was in far-away Kentucky; and when he learned that a descent was planned on the post which had been named after him, and which was the only protection of those most dear to him, he realized that escape must be no longer delayed. Secreting a little venison and starting for the hunt as was his wont, he struck boldly off. Well he knew pursuit would be instant and vindictive, for the Indians would view his flight as the blackest ingratitude. Doubling on his tracks, fording streams, utilizing every resource at the command of the skilled woodsman to baffle a following enemy, he pressed steadily ahead, unmindful of hunger, fatigue, or injury. Five days afterwards, famished, footsore, and bleeding, he staggered into Boonesborough, where he came as one risen from the dead. A few hurried incoherent words, and the settlers understood. When the Indians appeared, they found the fort in readiness for them, and though the siege they laid was long and crafty, it ended in their discomfited retreat.



DANIEL BOONE AT EIGHTY-FIVE

From the only contemporary portrait of Boone, a painting made by Chester Harding in 1819.

*Reproduced, by permission, from "Daniel Boone," by Reuben G. Thwaites, published by D. Appleton & Co.*



The climax of Boone's career as an Indian-fighting pioneer came with the battle of the Blue Licks, one of the bloodiest and most disastrous in the annals of border warfare, and the miserable sequel to an event memorable as revealing to an unexampled degree the heroism of the mothers and daughters of the early West. One morning the inhabitants of an outlying post awoke to find themselves surrounded by some three or four hundred warriors, mostly fierce Wyandottes, under the command of the infamous renegade Simon Girty.\* Girty, it soon became apparent, hoped to gain an easy victory by feigning an attack at the main gate, and, when this should draw out the garrison, making the real assault with the remainder of his force, whom he would meantime keep hidden in the forest. Promptly the veteran backwoodsmen arranged a counter-ruse. But first it was necessary to procure a supply of water, for without water they knew they could not withstand what was likely to prove a protracted siege. And for water, unfortunately, they were

\* There was also present with the invaders a small force of Canadian Rangers commanded by a loyalist, Capt. William Caldwell, who was the nominal head of the expedition. But it seems to be true, as Kentucky historians have claimed, that it was to Girty rather than to Caldwell that the Indians looked for leadership. For a good account of the life of this really remarkable "white Indian" consult Consul Willshire Butterfield's "History of the Girtys."

dependent on a spring in the very midst of the lurking Indians.

It was now that the women proved their mettle. Hazarding their lives on the chance that the ambushed foe would make no move until battle were given to the attacking party, they sallied out, bucket in hand, and in single file moved up the narrow trail to the spring. They could plainly discern the glint of the rifles in the undergrowth, the waving feathers, the tawny forms, but never an indication did they give of the horror and dread that held their souls. One by one, chatting and laughing with sublime control, they reached the spring, dipped up its limpid water, and returned, heroines whose noble deed deserves to be forever remembered, not in Kentucky alone, but in all the land.\* With their return the garrison acted. Shouting and hallooing to give an exaggerated idea of their number, a handful of volunteers hurried after the retreating Indians; and then, as the war-whoop went up from the woods behind and a savage troop hurled itself forward, a deadly volley blazed from the stockade,

\* Bryan's Station, situated on the road between the present cities of Lexington and Paris, was the scene of this notable instance of woman's bravery. It is pleasant to be able to record that a few years ago the Lexington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution marked the site of the famous spring by building a memorial wall around it.

carrying to Girty ample and fearful intimation that his plans had miscarried.

Before another daybreak, warned that relief expeditions were hurrying from Boonesborough and other settlements, the copper-colored foe withdrew, to be overtaken two days later, just after they had crossed the Licking River at the lower Blue Licks. The country thereabout was singularly wild and difficult, lending itself admirably to purposes of ambuscade, and Boone, who commanded part of the little army, was of the opinion that it would be well to await reinforcements before continuing the pursuit. But rasher counsels prevailed. Spurring his horse into the river, another officer called on all who were not cowards to follow him, and, stung by the taunt, the Kentuckians cast prudence to the winds, forded the Licking, and rushed tumultuously up the barren bluffs on its opposite side. Here a semblance of order was restored, and a march begun along a ridge that was flanked on each side by densely wooded ravines, reaching down to the edge of the river, which at this point took a wide circular sweep.

In these ravines the Indians lay so skilfully concealed that not an inkling of their presence was had until the pursuers were almost upon them. Then the first knowledge came in a hail of bullets, fired

at close range and inflicting terrible loss. The next moment the entrapped pioneers were in hand-to-hand conflict with a foe much stronger and not a whit less courageous than they. There could be but one issue. Breaking, they fled precipitately back to the river, the triumphant Wyandottes fast on their heels. Boone, who stood his ground until the flight became general, had the agonizing experience of seeing his son fall mortally wounded by his side. Heedless of his own danger, he stooped, lifted him from the ground, and bore him swiftly down the rocky slope and into the Licking. Above him the massacre continued, about him the bullets rained — his one thought was of the child that had been, the man that was, gasping and groaning in his arms. In vain his devotion, in vain his muttered prayer. Before the river was crossed the death agony had come, and, with a hurried farewell caress, he laid down his inanimate burden and sought refuge in the forest, making his way by toilsome stages to the post whence the expedition had set out with such high hopes. And there, to his greater sorrow and wrath, he found the reinforcements whose coming he had urged his companions to await. The Indians had done their bloody work and had escaped. All that remained was to revisit

the battle-ground and bury the mutilated, unrecognizable dead.

Yet there was a little more which could in time be done, and Boone played his part in the doing of it. One thousand strong, mounted and armed, the settlers met together from all sections of the western country, crossed the border, and hastened northwards, not halting until they reached the Indian towns of Chillicothe, Pickaway, and Willstown. Before their advance the tribesmen melted away, leaving the avengers to plunder and destroy at will. Great was the desolation they wrought — so great that never again did the red men attempt to invade Kentucky in force. The battle of the Blue Licks and its aftermath marked, in fact, a turning-point in the history of the settlement of the Middle West. Thereafter, though for long there were sporadic raids, and though for long the Indian continued to roam and slay, the future complete predominance of the white man was assured. And in this knowledge we may well take leave of the settlers and their pathfinder, for whom Fate still held in store much that was romantic and adventurous, and who, in a ripe old age, was to die as he had lived — well in advance of civilization, and with his gaze turned steadfastly in the direction of the setting sun.

## CHAPTER II

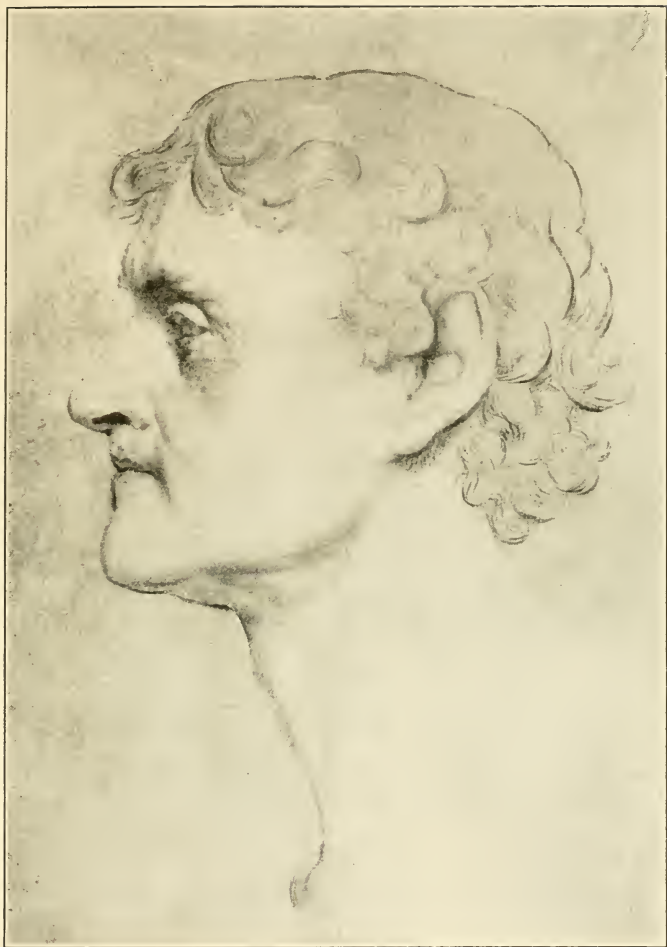
### THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

THE first forward step in the territorial expansion of the United States became an accomplished fact December 17, 1803, when the French flag gave place to the Stars and Stripes at the city of New Orleans. With this act, and as the result not of conquest but of diplomacy, the American Republic that had come into being only a few years before extended its dominions from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and paved the way for its future pre-eminence among the nations of the world. Even to-day the giant stride thus taken staggers the imagination. Harassed by problems at home and abroad, critical problems which menaced the very existence of the new-born nation, and already in possession of a territory that seemed ample for the support of many future generations, there might well have been deemed cause for hesitancy when the opportunity offered for the acquirement of new

lands and with new lands added burdens. Yet that opportunity was grasped with stupendous celerity and with an enthusiasm which showed that, young as the nation was, it had begun to appreciate its power and its capabilities. That the opportunity came unsought only increases the marvel of the readiness with which it was seized. Pondering the pages of the early history of the United States, it is easy enough now to realize that from the moment Daniel Boone opened the pathway to the West the future extension of the American people was a thing inevitable, and that had the Mississippi barrier not been raised when it was by the purchase of the vast territory known as Louisiana, it would have been raised at some later day, albeit at the cost not of dollars but of blood. But the actors in the mighty drama of the Louisiana Purchase could not see this as we of the twentieth century see it. They could only hope and dream, and all honor to them that they did hope and dream. To each one who played a part in securing for his country this its first and greatest territorial acquisition belongs imperishable glory; and in especial must tribute be paid to the memory of Thomas Jefferson, the national chief executive who, discarding all political and partisan prejudices, gave effect to the agreement that had

been reached in distant France, and by so doing rendered his noblest service to posterity.

Jefferson, in truth, may fairly be accounted the first of the long line of notable American expansionists. There were others, like Alexander Hamilton, who cherished ideals of a greater America than that which had been born of the struggle for independence. But it was Jefferson's distinction to be the first to give form and reality to such ideals, and to transform dreams into deeds. No more singular mistake can be made than to imagine, as some have imagined, that his share in the Louisiana Purchase was purely fortuitous, and that in acting as he did he merely pursued a policy of opportunism founded on what he perceived to be the will of the people. On the contrary, the Louisiana Purchase meant to him the realization of a long and ardently cherished desire, a consummation none the less welcome because it came so unexpectedly. It was the good fortune of the nation that he occupied the Presidential chair at the moment when Napoleon found it necessary to relinquish his grasp of the rich domain wrung from the yielding Spaniard. Another, with less penetrating vision into the possibilities and exigencies of the years to come, would have faltered and let slip the golden opportunity. But Jefferson,



THOMAS JEFFERSON

From a crayon drawing, now in the possession of Dr. W. C. N. Randolph, of Charlottesville, Virginia, the great-grandson of Jefferson.



true expansionist, one is tempted to write greatest of American expansionists, understood, and, understanding, acted.

There is temptation, too, to declare that it was his destiny to crown his wonderful career by the Louisiana Purchase. Certainly the story of his life, when considered in relation to the Purchase, tends to bear out this view. He was born April 13, 1743, in a Virginia farmhouse among the foothills of the Blue Ridge. From his father, a sturdy yeoman, himself Virginia born, he inherited a stalwart frame, a stout constitution, an independent and self-reliant spirit, and a lasting love for the life outdoors. His mother, likewise a Virginian, and daughter of one of the proudest and wealthiest families of the colony, bequeathed him the gentler qualities of kindness, affability, and courtesy; and, it is to be inferred from the little that has been recorded of her, also blessed him with the literary talent which was to find immortal expression in after years. Added to the happy combination of characteristics with which he was thus endowed was the beneficent influence of the environment of his infancy and early youth. From the wilderness which stretched for miles about the little clearing, he drew in with his first breath sentiments of freedom and liberality.

As he grew older and roamed through the forest gun in hand, these sentiments were deepened by contemplation of the open and untrammelled ways of nature. He perceived, too, in the broad vistas of woodland, valley, mountain range, and stream, a perpetual symbol of the vastness and grandeur and opportunities of the land in which he lived. And doubtless, like Daniel Boone, himself at that time serving his apprenticeship in another corner of the border, he felt the frontiersman's longing to press on and on through the cool green spaces to the mountains, and beyond the mountains to the mysterious depths in which each night the sun sank to repose.

But there were ties that held him in the East. At the age of seventeen behold him, tall, sinewy, sandy-haired, and freckled, a trifle awkward, but of boundless good nature, infinite hope, and a radiant smile, mounting his horse and by leisurely stages making his way from the mountains to the colony's quaint old capital, there to begin the education that would fit him for the one career open to well-connected and ambitiously inclined Virginians. Earnest, brilliant, capable, such was the impression he made that when, after two years of unremitting effort, he graduated triumphantly from college and

began the study of law, the famous George Wythe, leader of the Virginia bar, willingly received him into his office. And so thoroughly did he command confidence and esteem that upon his admission to practise clients came to him a plenty, country bred though he was.\* A little later, and in the very year that Boone began his epoch-making pilgrimage to Kentucky, he found himself a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, fairly launched on his long and useful political career.

As the event at once proved, he had, throughout his years of city life, clung steadfastly to the principles and yearnings implanted in him by the influences of childhood, influences which were reinforced by frequent and prolonged visits to the well-loved home, now transformed from wilderness to a prosperous plantation. Scarcely had he taken his seat among his fellow-legislators, before the House, already restive under the increasing impositions of the home authorities, was dissolved by an irate Governor; and immediately, with Washington, Lee, Henry, and others to whom after events were to

\* Jefferson left no record of his business before the lower courts, but during his first year as a practising lawyer, he had sixty-eight cases before the General Court, during his second year one hundred and fifteen cases, and during his third year one hundred and ninety-eight. His first year's practise before the General Court alone netted him nearly three hundred pounds.

bring the guerdon of immortality, Jefferson began the campaign of agitation and exhortation that culminated in the historic document which commemorates for all time his first great service to his fellow-men. For the present purpose, however, there is no need to follow him through this impressive period of his life. But there is vital need to pause for a moment and recall an event which, occurring in the year after the Declaration of Independence had been announced to the world, and when Jefferson was once more a Virginia legislator, turned his attention as never before to the region beyond the mountains, and may properly be said to mark the starting-point of the policy that found fruition in the Louisiana Purchase.

This event was the arrival in Virginia of George Rogers Clark, fresh from the wilds and eager to secure authorization for his daring project of seizing the British posts on the northwest frontier, and thus stemming the tide of Indian invasion that threatened to overwhelm the border settlements. To Virginia he came because, as he well knew, Virginia laid claim to all the territory stretching westward from her southern boundary to the Mississippi and northward to the Great Lakes. Listening to his forceful eloquence, and following with keen inter-

est the romantic vicissitudes and the splendid triumph of the enterprise that resulted from his visit East, Jefferson's heart went out with the liveliest sympathy to Clark and to all who were striving with him to obtain mastery of the wilderness. If he had not done so before, he fully appreciated now the significance of the migration that had set in by way of Boone's trail. And, as may be seen from his correspondence, as soon as he became Governor of Virginia — that is to say, within a few months after Clark had finally established himself at Kaskaskia and Vincennes — he was prompt in taking measures to strengthen the defenses of the western country, and, as shown by the creation of the Virginia Land Office, to promote its settlement.\* To the border folk, likewise, he instinctively turned when hard pressed by the still vindictive foe. "I have a peculiar confidence in the men from the western side of the mountains," was his message to Clark in the opening month of the critical year 1781. Thereafter, to the day of his death, his "peculiar confidence" continued unabated.

It would, in fact, be difficult to name a Revolutionary statesman to whom the war brought a wider

\* P. L. Ford's Edition, "The Writings of Thomas Jefferson," vol. II, p. 293, et seq.

understanding of the temper and aspirations of the transmontane settlers. The surroundings amid which he had spent his childhood and early youth and the characteristics acquired from his rugged and outright father had, of course, laid a solid foundation for such an understanding. But not until war came and the long-persisting controversies with the mother country had been submitted to the arbitrament of arms did the opportunity offer for close contact with and just appreciation of the men who were taking part in the westward movement. With the outbreak of hostilities, however, and in especial from the moment he became Governor of a State that claimed sovereignty over almost the whole of the western country, no other leader in the colossal struggle was so happily situated to glimpse the nascent Republic in its entirety. His earlier activity in connection with the preliminaries of the Revolution had made him well acquainted with the spirit of the seaboard people. Now he obtained an equally clear knowledge of the spirit of the people who had migrated from the seaboard. And, sympathizing with the one as truly and profoundly as with the other, perceiving their mutual jealousies, but perceiving also their mutual interests, it was inevitable that his view should broaden, that to the

ideal of independence he should add the ideal of nationality and of national growth.

It was some time, however, before the consequences of his war-time experience became apparent. Chagrined at the criticisms passed upon his official conduct, he refused to stand for re-election as Governor, and went into a retirement that was prolonged by the grief into which he was cast through the loss of his beloved wife. But even in retirement there are indications — though scanty, for little of his correspondence during this period has been preserved — that he kept a close watch on the trend of events and was eager to advance the interests not of Virginia only, but of all the country. And, once he assumed again the burdens and responsibilities of public life, the evidence of his really nationalistic sentiments rapidly increases. As a member of the Continental Congress in the spring of 1784 he was prominent in the cession to the Union of the great territory in the Northwest to which Virginia laid claim, and it was he who drew up the first plan for the government of the region thus ceded. Similarly he busied himself in devising measures for the wise distribution of the public lands, and, after he had entered on his treaty-framing mission abroad, in laboring to bring about an adjustment of the

complications which had developed in the Southwest owing to the evident intention of Spain to close the navigation of the Mississippi, the one commercial highway affording the pioneers of Kentucky and Tennessee ready access to the markets of the East. It was this short-sighted policy that gave rise to the agitation which finally resulted in the Louisiana Purchase; and long before the Purchase was effected it was this same policy, reviewed in the light of a sublime confidence in his countrymen's potentialities, that started dreams of expansion in the mind of the already nationalistic Jefferson.

The rapidity with which these dreams took form, and the early date at which he began to ponder means of giving them reality, may be seen from a letter of January 25, 1786, written to Archibald Stuart from Paris, where Jefferson had now succeeded Franklin as Minister to France. Stuart, seemingly, had called his attention to the growing spirit of anger and unrest that was taking possession of the Westerners in consequence of the Government's failure to arrive at an understanding with Spain, and Jefferson wrote in reply: "I fear from an expression in your letter that the people of Kentucky think of separating not only from Virginia (in which they are right) but also from the Confed-

eracy. I own I should think this a most calamitous event, and such an one as every good citizen on both sides should set himself against. Our present federal limits are not too large for good government, nor will the increase of votes in Congress produce any ill effect. On the contrary, it will drown the little divisions at present existing there. Our Confederacy must be viewed as the nest from which all America, North and South, is to be peopled. We should take care, too, not to think it for the interest of that great continent to press too soon on the Spaniards. Those countries cannot be in better hands. My fear is that they are too feeble to hold them till our population can be sufficiently advanced to gain it from them piece by piece.” \*

Bearing in mind the date of this letter and the sentiments it expressed, the inference is irresistible that ideas of expansion lay at the bottom of the proposal he soon afterwards made to the Connecticut traveler, Ledyard, then in Paris, and panting to achieve new laurels as an explorer. As Jefferson himself tells the story in his *Memoir of Meriwether Lewis*, he suggested to Ledyard that he traverse Russia to Kamchatka, cross to Nootka Sound, and thence “fall down into the latitude of the Missouri,

\* Ford's Edition, vol. IV, pp. 188-89.

and penetrate to and through that to the United States." This would indeed be a personal triumph for Ledyard, since no white man had as yet crossed the continent from ocean to ocean; and to the United States it would at least mean some knowledge of the geography and resources of the unexplored territory between the Mississippi and the Pacific. It is significant to note, also, that Jefferson made no attempt to secure from Spain permission for this journey through her colonial domain; his only care was to gain the consent of Russia, and it was in consequence of the unexpected withdrawal of that consent, for reasons which must be left to conjecture, that Ledyard ultimately found it impossible to execute his mission, being arrested by order of the Empress when within two hundred miles of Kamchatka and hurried to Poland, whence he sadly carried to Jefferson the news of his failure.

The latter, meantime, had been wrought to a high pitch of indignation by learning that, in order to effect a favorable commercial treaty with Spain, Congress might waive the Mississippi claims. "I will venture to say," he protested to Madison, in a letter from Paris, January 30, 1787, "that the act which abandons the navigation of the Mississippi is an act of separation between the eastern and the

western country.”\* Yet he realized only too well that the United States was in no position to accept the alternative suggested by Jay the year before, when he gave it as his opinion that American rights on the Mississippi could be secured only “by arms or by treaty.” To the Kentuckians, therefore, Jefferson counseled patience, advising them “to defer pushing their right to that navigation to extremity as long as they can do without it,”† and to await if possible the outbreak of a European war when Spain would be less favorably situated to resist the American demands. Perhaps he also had in view the maintenance of the *status quo* until the United States should be strong enough to begin the process of absorption depicted in his letter to Stuart. At any rate, soon after his return from France to enter Washington’s Cabinet, we find him making a first tentative move in the direction of actual expansion.

The Mississippi question was still unsettled, and had, in fact, grown more acute. Immigrants by the thousand were pouring from the tide-water country into the region watered by the lordly river and its tributaries, but Spain stubbornly adhered to her refusal to grant their produce-laden vessels

\* Ford’s Edition, vol. IV, p. 363.

† Ford’s Edition, vol. V, p. 17.

free passage to the Gulf. True to her standards of diplomatic dilatoriness, she shuffled, evaded, postponed. Accordingly, it became one of Jefferson's first tasks as Secretary of State to spur the American representative at Madrid, Chargé d'Affaires Carmichael, to renewed efforts to reach a definite understanding; and in so doing he made a most significant suggestion. It would be well, he instructed Carmichael, to propose to the Spanish Government not simply a treaty securing the desired privilege of navigation, but a treaty whereby Spain would cede to the United States all her territory on the east side of the Mississippi "on condition that we guarantee all her possessions on the western waters of that river, she agreeing, further, to subsidize us if the guarantee brings us into war."

To convince Spain that the United States would rest content with such a cession, and would make no attempt to dislodge her from the western bank of the Mississippi, he also instructed Carmichael to assure King Charles and his Ministers that it was not in the interest of the United States to obtain possession of trans-Mississippi territory, and that a policy of conquest had no place in the American scheme of government. To quote his own words: "Conquest not in our principles; inconsistent with

our government.”\* That this, however, was simply a diplomatic subterfuge, and that he really entertained radically different ideas, is strikingly exhibited by a letter he wrote to Washington less than a year later, when Spain had embarked on the policy of endeavoring to alienate the western settlers from their allegiance to the United States. “Governor Quesada,” he reported to the President, “by order of his court is inviting foreigners to go and settle in Florida. This is meant for our people. . . . I wish a hundred thousand of our inhabitants would accept the invitation. It will be the means of delivering to us peaceably what may otherwise cost us a war. In the meantime we may complain of this seduction of our inhabitants just enough to make them believe we think it very wise policy for them and confirm them in it. This is my idea of it.”†

Clearly, the politic Jefferson did not shrink from adopting the methods of Old World diplomacy. There is reason, also, for suspecting that his program was not confined to the prospective annexation of Florida. In 1792 the opportune arrival of a French botanist, André Michaux, commissioned by his Government to study the flora of the

\* Ford's Edition, vol. V, p. 230.

† Ford's Edition, vol. V, p. 316.

United States, suggested to Jefferson a renewal of the Ledyard scheme of traversing the continent. It is generally thought that in this he was animated by a purely scientific zeal; but, in the light of subsequent events, a different interpretation seems warranted from the fact that the instructions drawn up for Michaux by Jefferson himself indicate that the great object of the proposed expedition was "that you seek for and pursue that route which shall form the shortest and most convenient communication between the higher parts of the Missouri and the Pacific Ocean."\* It is noteworthy, too, that, like the Ledyard expedition, Michaux's undertaking came to grief through the intervention of a foreign Government, the French Minister recalling the botanist after he had proceeded as far as Kentucky. And it may be added in passing, when the project was next revived, in the midst of the excitement engendered by the news that Spain had ceded Louisiana to France, it was broached in a way and under circumstances that have led the latest historian of the Purchase period, Edward Channing, to suggest that Jefferson may have had in mind a possible seizure of the region through which his explorers afterwards made their way on their historic over-

\* Ford's Edition, vol. VI, p. 160.

land journey. "The Louisiana Purchase," dryly observes Professor Channing, "came in the nick of time to save Jefferson from violating the code of international ethics." \*

Nothing developed from the proposal that Spain cede her eastern possessions to the United States; but in 1795 a treaty was finally effected securing to the people of Kentucky and Tennessee, though for only three years, the right to use the Mississippi, and to transship their products at New Orleans from river craft to ocean-going vessels. Unhappily, on the expiration of the period named, the old-time prohibition was renewed, and at once the Westerners, whose wrath was increased by appreciation of the fleeting prosperity they had enjoyed, besieged the National Government with complaints and demands for redress. Again there was talk of conquest, even of secession. Jefferson, so far as can be judged from his writings, took no very active part in the initial efforts to cope with a problem that had once more become of the utmost menace to the American body politic. But, from what has already been said, it is not difficult to imagine the interest with which he watched the rising storm and noted how

\* Edward Channing's "The Jeffersonian System," p. 88. Published as vol. XII of the "American Nation" co-operative history of the United States.

rapidly the country was drifting to a settlement with Spain along the lines laid down in his memorandum to Carmichael, nearly ten years before. Not even he, however, could foresee the singular turn affairs were to take before a settlement was actually reached.

The Louisiana country, it must be remembered, had originally belonged to France. Basing her claim on the explorations of La Salle and the gallant adventurers who came after La Salle, she had until the French and Indian War exercised dominion over the fertile lands stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to her Canadian possessions, and from the Appalachian to the Rocky Mountains. Never had she become reconciled to the cruel fate that ousted her completely from these fair territories, compelling her to turn them over in part to England as the result of conquest, and in part to Spain as the price of a Spanish alliance. For a time, torn and weakened by the internal dissensions that culminated in the Revolution, she was obliged to put aside all thought of endeavoring to re-establish her sovereignty overseas. But with the advent of Napoleon and the recrudescence of her vigor under his masterful impulse, her hopes rose anew. To Napoleon himself nothing seemed more desirable than to supplement his Old World program of French

aggrandizement by rebuilding the New World empire of France; and, appreciating the essential weakness of Spain, he resolved to make a beginning by securing from her a retrocession of Louisiana, and, if possible, a cession of the Floridas also. Quietly and expeditiously he went to work, dangling before the dynastically ambitious Spanish court the bait of a rich Italian principality. The Floridas he failed to obtain, but, by the secret treaty of San Ildefonso, October 1, 1800, it was agreed that, in return for the elevation of King Charles's son-in-law, the Duke of Parma, to the throne of Tuscany, Spain would reconvey Louisiana to France.

Most mischievous to Spain, this absurdly one-sided bargain, and the more one-sided since Napoleon failed to fulfil his share of the agreement, promised to be no less mischievous to the United States by imposing upon her a powerful and aggressive neighbor. But it was months before so much as a rumor of the projected retrocession reached the shores of America, where, in the meantime, conciliatory action by the Spanish authorities at New Orleans had placated the wrathful men of the West, and where Jefferson had replaced Adams in the Presidential chair. When the news did leak out, it created the greatest uneasiness. Jefferson, who

in his inaugural address had indulged his expansionist ideas so far as to assure his countrymen that they were "advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye," frankly voiced his alarm. "We fear," he wrote to his son-in-law, Thomas Mann Randolph, May 14, 1801, "that Spain is ceding Louisiana to France, an inauspicious circumstance to us;" \* and similarly twelve days later in a letter to Monroe, "There is considerable reason to apprehend that Spain cedes Louisiana and the Floridas to France. It is a policy very unwise in both, and very ominous to us." † There was at the time no American Minister to France, but instructions were at once sent to the Minister to Spain urging him to ascertain what truth there might be in the reports concerning the retrocession. No satisfactory intelligence being obtained, the vacancy to France was now filled by the appointment of Robert R. Livingston, who was directed to press diligently for an acknowledgment of Napoleon's intentions. Still nothing definite could be learned, and at last, determined to make plain to France the attitude of the United States, Jefferson personally addressed to Livingston a long letter

\* Massachusetts Historical Society's "Collections," 7th series, vol. I, p. 95.

† Ford's Edition, vol. VIII, p. 58.

of instructions, bidding him let Napoleon know that "the day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who in conjunction can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation." \*

Remembering the animosity with which Jefferson had regarded England and all things English since the days of the struggle for independence, and the affection he had hitherto entertained for France, nothing shows more clearly how thoroughly aroused he was. But it is to be observed that his main care was not to keep the French out of Louisiana, but to keep them out of New Orleans, and thus make sure that the gateway to the world's markets would remain open to the Mississippi folk. Already Livingston had been instructed to propose a cession of the Floridas and New Orleans to the United States, and in this same letter Jefferson bade him inform the French Government that such a cession "would certainly, to a great degree, remove the causes of jealousy and irritation between us." Still, he significantly added, "we should consider New Orleans

\* Ford's Edition, vol. VIII, p. 145.

and the Floridas as equivalent for the risk of a quarrel with France produced by her vicinage." \* In other words, it would be the part of wisdom for France to forego altogether her contemplated occupation of Louisiana. Bold language this, but language that would have had no effect whatever upon the unshakable Napoleon had it not been for the chance concurrence of action proceeding from quite another quarter.

Fully resolved to carry through his plans, deterred only by the persistency with which the heroic negro insurrectionists of San Domingo engaged the troops designed for the occupation of Louisiana, Napoleon suddenly found himself face to face with a war-intending England. Lacking command of the sea, he at once realized the necessity of abandoning his New World enterprise. But he could still hope to win profit from it, profit in money and profit in friendship. England, he told himself, must never win Louisiana. Nor, though he had not paid for it, would he hand it back to Spain. He would, instead, transfer it to the United States, which, he did not doubt, would be willing to pay handsomely for it, and would at the same time forgive and forget past injuries and be drawn into closer relations with

\* Ford's Edition, vol. VIII, p. 146.

France than ever before. And thus it happened that when Jefferson's envoys, Livingston and Monroe, in the spring of 1803 formally approached him with an offer for the purchase of New Orleans and the Floridas, they were informed that France did not have the Floridas to sell, but was quite willing to part not only with New Orleans, but with all Louisiana.

There is nothing to show that this counter-offer had been anticipated and that Monroe and Livingston carried secret instructions authorizing them to accept it. But, confident that their action would be indorsed by Jefferson, Congress, and the nation, they did not hesitate. Less than a month after Monroe's arrival the treaty was signed, doubling the area of the United States at the cost of a beggarly fifteen million dollars, and setting the seal on her future predominance over the North American continent. Well might Livingston exclaim: "We have lived long, but this is the noblest work of our lives!" And well might Jefferson feel, when the good news from France reached America, that his dreams were at last coming true and that he had been justified in viewing the "Confederacy" as "the nest from which all America, North and South, is to be peopled."

There were, to be sure, certain phases of the Purchase that troubled him. A stickler for strict construction of the Constitution, he could find nowhere in the Constitution authority for the acquisition of territory; and, moreover, such acquisition would do violence to another of his strongest political beliefs — the belief that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, it being evident that the people of Louisiana had had no voice in the transaction. But, Constitution or no Constitution, acquiescence or non-acquiescence, the Purchase, he felt, must be carried through. Writing, in August, to the Kentucky Senator, John C. Breckinridge, he declared: "Objections are raising to the Eastward against the vast extent of our boundaries, and propositions are made to exchange Louisiana, or a part of it, for the Floridas. But . . . we shall get the Floridas without, and I would not give one inch of the waters of the Mississippi to any nation, because I see in a light very important to our peace an exclusive right to its navigation, and the admission of no nation into it, but as into the Potomac and the Delaware with our consent and under our police." \* He did, indeed, as a compromise with his fears regarding the unconsti-

\* Ford's Edition, vol. VIII, p. 243.




THE SIGNING OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE TREATY  
From the commemorative statue at the St. Louis Exposition.



tutional character of the transaction, suggest that the Constitution be amended to permit the inclusion of Louisiana within the boundaries of the United States, and went so far as to draft an amendment to that effect. But when Livingston sent him word that there was danger of Napoleon's repenting the bargain and repudiating his agreement, he hesitated no longer, summoned Congress in extra session, and forced the treaty to a speedy and a happy vote.

Nor, when we recall his earlier declarations with respect to the future of the United States, can it be deemed surprising that he chose to appear a monster of inconsistency rather than sacrifice the splendid opportunity that so suddenly presented itself. On the contrary, it would have been surprising had he not pursued exactly the course he did. And, as a matter of fact, there was at bottom no inconsistency in his conduct. Uphold as he might State rights, limitations of government, and the like, not even Hamilton was more truly nationalistic at heart than was Thomas Jefferson. His fundamental principle was the welfare of the nation, the making of the nation really great and really strong. More than this, as we have seen, his bounding vision overleaped the confines of space and time, hopefully



anticipating the moment when his country would attain those "destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye." He did not expect to live to see the first of the great extensions of which he spoke so prophetically, and to bring about which he labored so earnestly. But a kindly fortune granted him that boon, and when the hour struck he was not found wanting.

## CHAPTER III

### ANDREW JACKSON AND THE ACQUISITION OF FLORIDA

IN all the steps whereby the American people extended their dominion from sea to sea, the element of inevitability is never so clearly discernible as in the acquisition of Florida. Desirable before, possession of Florida became essential to the welfare of the nation from the moment of the Louisiana Purchase. Its geographical situation gave it command over the marine highway between the old and the new sections of the United States, and in alien hands it thus constituted not merely an unwelcome break in the continuity of the coast-line, but a possible menace to American shipping and commerce. There was always the danger, too, and a danger which speedily proved very real, that in time of war it might be utilized by a foreign power as a base for military operations. Its owner, Spain, was notoriously weak, as had been amply demonstrated by Napoleon's course in the matter of Louisiana; and it was more than doubtful whether

she could enforce the neutrality of her distant province against any power whatsoever. For the same reason, it was to be feared that if the United States did not acquire Florida for herself, ownership might pass to a country stronger than Spain and by so much the more undesirable as a neighbor.

There were also minor but still cogent considerations urging immediate effort to extend American sovereignty to the peninsula. It was watered, in part, by navigable streams affording American settlers a Gulf outlet for their products, and experience had shown that so long as Spain retained control of these streams their navigation would be impeded. Again, notwithstanding Spain's centuries of occupation, no successful attempt at colonization and settlement had been made, and, outside of a few scattered and paltry garrison towns, Florida was almost wholly given over to the wilderness and the savage, and was infested by a motley population of Indians, fugitive slaves, pirates, and outlaws of every sort, who waged a vindictive warfare against the frontier inhabitants of Louisiana and Georgia. This also, in the case of the Indians at any rate, despite the fact that Spain had by treaty solemnly pledged herself to repress hostile outbreaks against the border folk. To tell the truth, she was not

strong enough to keep her obligation; but her failure to do so only brought home more forcibly to the American Government the necessity of terminating a state of affairs that promised to grow constantly more dangerous to the peace and well-being of the Republic. Indeed, as developed in the course of our study of the Louisiana Purchase, so early as 1790 a formal proposition was framed for the purchase of Florida, and it was Florida rather than Louisiana that was kept steadily in view throughout the negotiations which ended so happily in 1803. Immediately thereafter the question of the acquisition of Florida was raised anew, to remain unsettled, however, until fifteen years later the fearless patriotism of one of the greatest of Americans forced it to an issue in accord with the will and necessity of the nation.

At the outset, it must be said, the United States committed a tactical blunder quite sufficient to account for the difficulty experienced in securing Spain's consent to part with her peninsular possession. Ever since 1763 Florida had been divided into two parts — East Florida, including all of the peninsula and westward along the Gulf coast to the Apalachicola River, and West Florida, continuing along the coast from the Apalachicola to the Mis-

issippi. Previous to that time, while the French were in possession of Louisiana, that part of West Florida lying between the rivers Perdido and Mississippi was recognized as a portion of Louisiana, not of Florida, with which it was incorporated only after France had ceded Louisiana to Spain, and Spain in turn had transferred Florida to England. Now, the Louisiana Purchase Treaty had not defined the bounds of the territory handed over to the United States by France — or rather by Napoleon — but it had described that territory as “the colony or province of Louisiana with the same extent that it has now in the hands of Spain, and that it had when France possessed it, and such as it should be after the treaties subsequently entered into between Spain and other States.” Obviously, this amazingly vague description left ample scope for argument with respect to that portion of West Florida which had once belonged unquestionably to Louisiana, and now seemed to be as unquestionably part of Florida; but the United States, instead of endeavoring to arrive at an understanding with Spain, to which England had in 1783 re-transferred Florida, took it for granted that Louisiana actually extended eastward to the Perdido, and, albeit Spain was then in active occupation of the country between the Mis-

Mississippi and the Perdido, in 1804 passed the so-called Mobile Act organizing that region for customs purposes and adding it to the Mississippi Territory.

Already stung to the quick by the high-handed manner in which Napoleon had disposed of Louisiana, Spain was instant to resent this step. Her Minister at Washington, the Marquis Casa d'Yrujo, penned a burning letter of remonstrance to Madison,\* who was then Secretary of State, and in a trice there began a bitter controversy which speedily involved France as well as Spain and the United States. But it is not necessary here to examine the details of this dispute or the merits of the question at issue. The point is that the immediate effect was to render Spain deaf to all overtures looking to a settlement on the basis of purchase, and when, some months later, Monroe arrived in Madrid eager to add to his Louisiana laurels by effecting a similarly satisfactory transaction with the Spanish Government, he was not long in discovering that he might well have spared himself the journey. It must be noted, too, that in the United States itself feeling ran high, and, as in the days antedating the Louisiana purchase, there was talk of invasion and conquest.

\* This letter is printed in part in H. B. Fuller's "The Purchase of Florida," pp. 122-24.

Hope was still cherished, nevertheless, by President Jefferson and his advisers that money, not war, would suffice for the winning of Florida; and to that end, though with considerable difficulty, Congress was persuaded, in the winter of 1805-6, to pass a bill appropriating two million dollars for negotiations with foreign powers, it being understood that the appropriation was made with a view to the purchase of Florida.

But again diplomacy proved barren of result, this time for the twofold reason that Spain was still in a state of excessive irritation, and was also confident that the European situation had become such as to preclude any attempt to oust her from Florida by force. Shortly, too, relations between the two countries were abruptly and involuntarily interrupted by the outbreak of the bloody revolution that was to mark the beginning of the end of Napoleonic despotism. In this way the *status quo*, so far as concerned Florida, continued unchanged until 1810, when there began a series of events that brought to the United States a lively sense of the necessity of taking firmer action than hitherto, and that should have aroused Spain to a realization of the wisdom of relinquishing Florida while there was still time to drive a favorable bargain.

The first of these events was an insurrection in West Florida. Taking advantage of the distressful condition of Spain, and infected by the revolutionary spirit that had already plunged the South American provinces into anarchy, a party of turbulent West Floridians, mostly fugitives from the justice of other lands, banded themselves together to throw off the Spanish yoke, and with little difficulty took by storm the fort at Baton Rouge. Their next move, after declaring a free and independent government, was to offer to turn the province over to the United States for a substantial consideration. Madison, who had now succeeded Jefferson in the Presidency, replied to this offer promptly, though not in the way the revolutionists had anticipated. Declaring, in a proclamation of October 27, 1810, that there had been far too much delay in adjusting the conflicting claims of the United States and Spain, he directed Governor Claiborne, of Orleans Territory, to take immediate possession of all the country from the Mississippi to the Perdido, and to govern it as part of his own Territory, with the understanding, however, "that in the hands of the United States it will not cease to be a subject of fair and friendly negotiation and adjustment."

For this action Madison was bitterly criticised at

the time, and has been even more bitterly criticised since. But, apart from the question of his possible usurpation of the legislative power, the course he adopted was in reality the only course open to him consistent with safeguarding the interests of his country. It was evident that Spanish authority in West Florida had given place to a lawless and irresponsible government, which it was impossible to recognize, and the continuance of which it was equally impossible to endure;\* it was also clear that Spain was in no position to restore order; and it was apparent, again, that warrant for American intervention could be found in the still unsettled claim, based on the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, that all of West Florida between the Mississippi and the Perdido was actually American territory. Madison's policy, in short, was a policy dictated by the necessities of self-defense, not by sheer greed for land, as is alleged by those who delight in depicting the United States' attitude to Spain, with respect to Florida, as that of a bandit intent on plunder. Similarly with the subsequent temporary occupation of Amelia Island, off the Atlantic coast of East Florida, though here there is some real ground for criticism in the manner in which the occupation

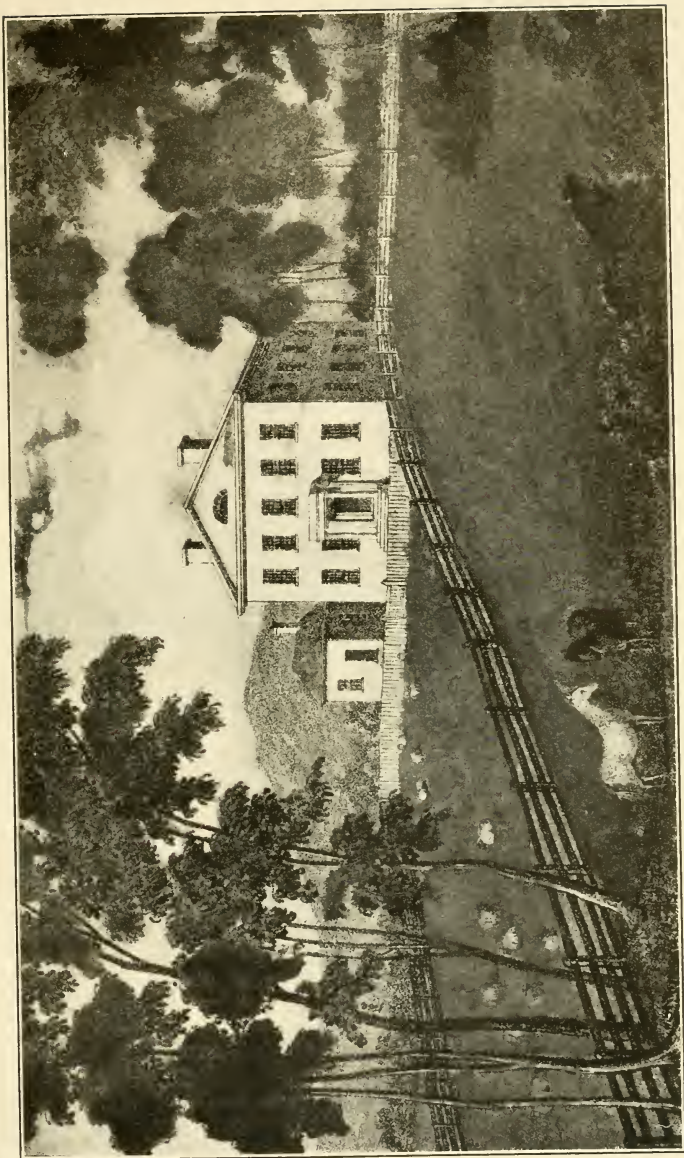
\* On this point, see Fuller's "The Purchase of Florida," pp. 181-86.

was effected. And in the same justifiable principle of self-defense will be found the true historical explanation of the step taken a year or so later by the man to whom, above all others, must be given the credit of bringing Spain to reason.

This was Andrew Jackson, as yet little known outside his own State of Tennessee, whither he had come from the Carolinas in 1788 as a young man of the humblest birth, without money and without friends, his sole reliance native wit and native courage. Making his home at Nashville, when it was still a crude border settlement bounded by pathless forests, he had plunged with ardor into the task, not only of gaining a livelihood, but of bettering the community in which he had elected to dwell. His first occupation, that of district attorney, proved his mettle, for in those days a district attorney had to take his life in his hands, such was the lawlessness rampant in the frontier country. At Indian fighting, too, he showed himself utterly devoid of fear. And if, as was only too apparent, he displayed in his conduct with his fellows an acrimony and bluntness of speech, an over-readiness to take offense, and an uncompromising assertiveness, these were defects readily condoned in one of such manifest honesty, integrity, straightforwardness, and daring.

Thus it happened that within an incredibly short time Jackson had become one of the most popular as well as one of the most respected citizens of Tennessee, and, almost as a matter of course, gravitated into politics, serving for a brief space in both Houses of Congress. But, finding himself out of his element in Washington, and longing for the free, open, and ultra-democratic life of the Western country, he had speedily resigned, and hastened home to preside over the Supreme Court of Tennessee, to gain election as Major-General of the State militia, and to engage in business. As judge, as soldier, and as business man he had steadily augmented his reputation until his brother Tennesseans fairly came to idolize him. Their ideals, they plainly saw, were his ideals, their interests his. Like them, he held an abiding faith in the possibilities and future of the land in which they lived; like them, he felt the instinct for growth and expansion; and — what is most important in the present connection — like them he would brush aside, with fiery impatience, all that might hamper expression of that instinct.

Such was the man — imperious, impetuous, masterful, and passionate, protagonist *par excellence* of the spirit of the early West — who by virtue of



THE HERMITAGE, JACKSON'S HOME IN TENNESSEE  
From an old lithograph by Pendleton.



his rank in the Tennessee militia took command, in the opening days of 1813, of a formidable force of sturdy frontiersmen, "called out for the defense of the lower country." Two years earlier, anticipating the outbreak of war with England and recognizing the possibility of Florida being occupied by the enemy for hostile purposes, Congress had authorized the President to take temporary possession of any part or all of that Spanish province "in the event of an attempt to occupy the said territory, or any part thereof, by any foreign power." Now that war had actually arrived, Madison was determined that the contingency of foreign occupation should not arise. To this end had Jackson's army been created, an army of which Jackson himself wrote enthusiastically: "They go at our country's call to do the will of the Government. No constitutional scruples trouble them. Nay, they will rejoice at the opportunity of placing the American eagle on the ramparts of Mobile, Pensacola, and Fort St. Augustine."\* As luck would have it, however, the Congress of 1813 was of a different temper from the Congress of 1811, and refused to support Madison in the projected occupation, the consequence being that

\* Jackson to Secretary Eustis, in James Parton's "The Life of Andrew Jackson," vol. II, p. 372.

Jackson and his men, without having accomplished anything, were forced to march home and leave the enemy free to utilize Florida at will.

Out of this freedom flowed momentous results to Jackson and to the nation. In the late autumn of that same year, instigated by English emissaries and armed from an English fleet, the Creek Indians took the war-path against the American settlers of the extreme South. The length and breadth of the border they harried, consummating, on August 30, the ghastly Fort Mims massacre, when out of five hundred and fifty soldiers and refugees in a pioneer stockade four hundred perished. Burning for vengeance, Jackson and his Tennesseans flew to arms, and now began a war within a war, and a war of extermination. All through the winter it raged and on until the spring, when, after the fearful battle of the Horseshoe, the stricken Creeks, all but annihilated, were glad to sue for peace. Then followed a brief rest for Jackson, but exceedingly brief. His splendid campaigning had won him the appointment of Major-General in the United States army to succeed "Tippecanoe" Harrison, who had resigned, and summer found him in the field again, this time in supreme command of the military department of the South.

Always chafing under the lost opportunity to raise the American flag in Florida, and doubly embittered by the knowledge that England had profited thereby, almost his first move was to write to the Secretary of War for permission to invade the peninsula. No reply coming, and news reaching him that an English force had landed at Pensacola, the capital of West Florida, he resolved, with characteristic recklessness, to delay no longer. But before he could make a beginning the English themselves assumed the aggressive, sailing from Pensacola to Mobile, whence they were soon compelled to sail again in less magnificent array. Eager to pursue, Jackson awaited only the arrival of reinforcements, and when these came, twenty-five hundred strong, from his beloved Tennessee, he was up and off. Marching across country, with the tempestuous celerity that had already begun to attract the attention of the entire country, he appeared before Pensacola three days after his departure from Mobile, served on the Spanish Governor a summary demand for surrender, and followed this up by an assault that forced speedy capitulation. In Fort Barrancas, near by, he found a small English garrison, but this escaped him, pausing in its flight only long enough to destroy the fort. Less than a week later he was

back in Mobile, passing thence by leisurely stages to New Orleans and the battle that won him an enduring place among the heroes of American history.

What had been theoretically asserted by the President and by Congress had been translated into action by Andrew Jackson. The United States was not at war with Spain; Florida was the territory of a supposedly friendly power; yet its soil had been invaded, its flag trampled in the dust, its people attacked. Nor could Spain with justice complain. Willingly or unwillingly, she had committed flagrant breaches of neutrality. She had permitted English troops to garrison her forts, English fleets to rendezvous in her harbors, and English officers to enlist within her borders savage allies against England's foes. It mattered not that she had been too weak to oppose effectively the English occupation; this fact alone should have convinced her, as it had fully convinced the United States, that the sooner she let go of Florida the better. Nevertheless, order having been re-established at home, and with order a resumption of diplomatic relations with America, she added Jackson's operations to the category of wrongs inflicted on her, and resumed her old course of tortuous and procrastinating

diplomacy. To persuade her of the folly of this course required another concrete demonstration of the lengths to which the United States was prepared to go if self-defense demanded, and again the needed lesson was read by Andrew Jackson.

The end of the war had by no means marked the end of English influence in Florida. English officers, and especially a Colonel Nicholls, commandant of the garrison that Jackson had expelled from Fort Barrancas, lingered in the peninsula even after peace had been declared, and spent much of their time in exciting the Florida Indians, the Seminoles, to renewed hostilities against the border settlers. Nicholls, in fact, went so far as to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance between England and the Indians, rebuild and equip an old fort on the Apalachicola, and demand in the name of the Indians a surrender of the lands ceded to the United States by the Creeks as the price of peace. After his departure for England, in the vain hope of securing from his Government official approval of these acts, the fort on the Apalachicola was seized by a number of fugitive slaves from Georgia and converted into a piratical stronghold of the worst description. Using it as a base, they ravaged the country for miles across the border, destroying the

property of their former masters, stealing horses and cattle, rescuing criminals, and killing all who resisted them. No doubt they could find some justification for their acts in the principle of retaliation, for the Georgians themselves were not models of law and order; but their brigandage and rapine soon became unendurable, and at the direction of the Secretary of War a message was sent by Jackson to the Governor of Pensacola demanding immediate action against them.

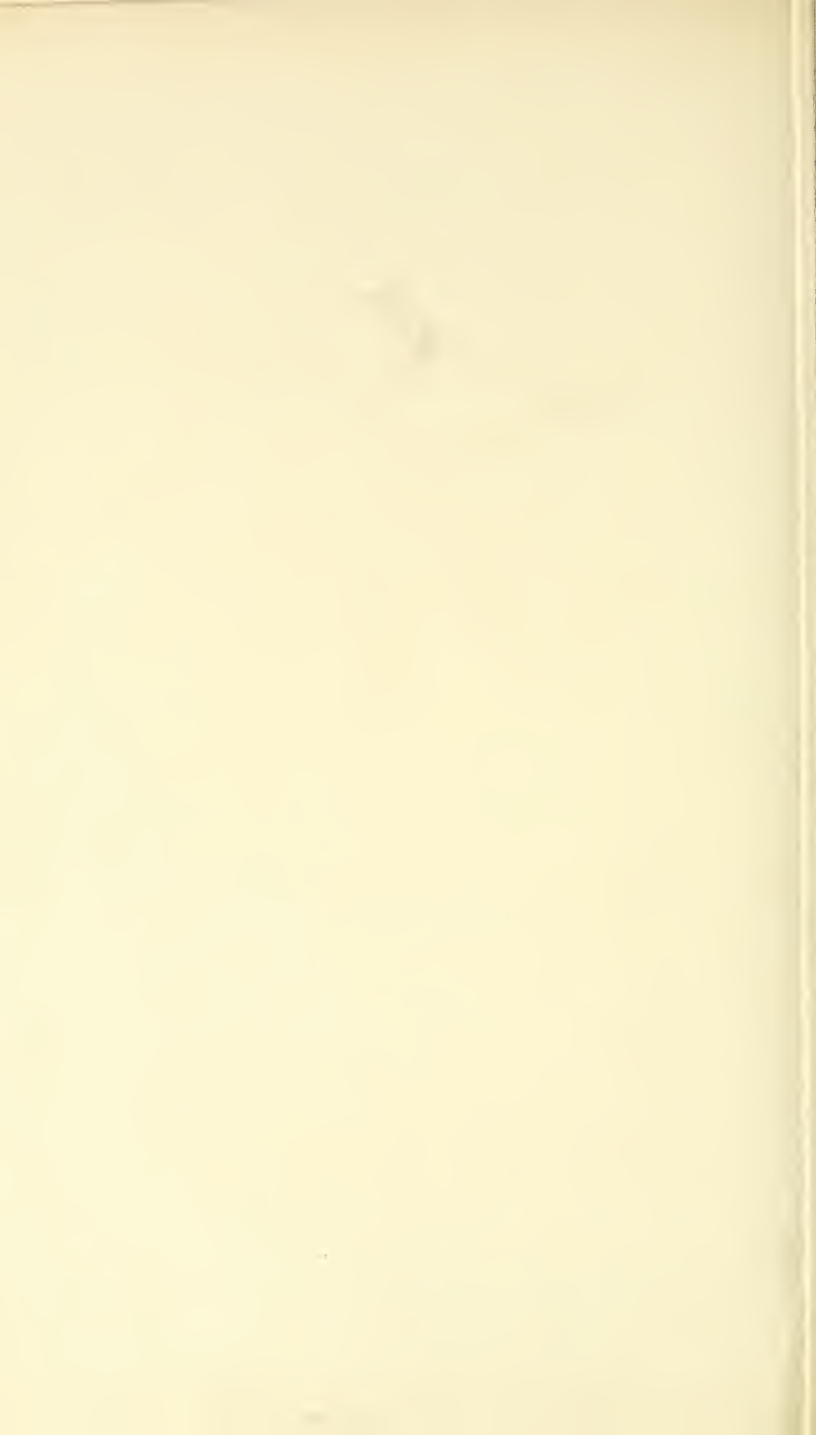
With this demand the Governor was either unwilling or unable to comply, and at once the wrathful Jackson resolved to act on his own account. "I have no doubt," he wrote to General Gaines, who was then building stockades and blockhouses in the adjacent territory ceded by the Creeks, "that this fort has been established by some villains for the purpose of murder, rapine, and plunder, and that it ought to be blown up regardless of the ground it stands on. If you have come to the same conclusion, destroy it and restore the stolen negroes to their rightful owners."\* It so happened that Gaines had ordered from New Orleans some supplies that would have to be carried past "Negro

\* Jackson to Gaines, April 18, 1816, in Fuller's "The Purchase of Florida," p. 229.



ANDREW JACKSON

From a painting by John Vanderlyn in the Council Chamber, City Hall, New York.



Fort," as it was popularly called; and he now instructed one of his officers, Colonel Clinch, to proceed down the Apalachicola with a body of troops and level the fort to the ground at the first sign of an attack on the transports. Coming down the river, Clinch fell in with a party of Seminoles who had their own grievances against the negroes, and he promptly pressed them into service and hurried on to the fort, near which he found the supply expedition. Excuse for hostilities was ready at hand in the fact that a boat's crew, landing for water, had lost four men in an attack by the negroes. Forthwith Clinch demanded the surrender of the fort, and obtaining in reply a defiant blast of cannonading, opened fire from a gunboat convoying the transports.

The first few shots did little damage, but victory came with amazing and shocking swiftness. In the fort's magazine some seven hundred barrels of gunpowder were stored, and a red-hot ball striking this caused an explosion that ended "Negro Fort" for all time, and cost the lives of almost all its defenders. No fewer than two hundred and seventy men, women, and children found an instant death, while of those still living, after the smoke had cleared away, only a pitiful minority endured the torments

of their wounds. It must be added, also, that at least two of the miserable survivors were handed over to the Indians to be cruelly tortured so long as a spark of life remained in their mutilated bodies — an apt illustration of the truth that the inhumanity of those barbarous years of border warfare was by no means confined to the enemies of the United States.

This fearful tragedy was but the opening act in the second Jacksonian invasion of Florida. Fresh grounds for complaint against the Spanish authorities soon developed in a renewal of hostilities by the Seminoles, the climax coming when, in revenge for the burning of a native village by American troops, the savages ambushed and massacred nearly fifty soldiers and settlers *en route* up the Apalachicola. At news of this, the War Department sent orders to Jackson to raise a large force, take command in person, and spare no efforts to bring about a lasting peace. But before these orders reached him, Jackson himself had addressed to Monroe, then President, a letter seething with indignation. It would be well, he declared, to seize the whole of East Florida and hold it “as indemnity for the outrages of Spain upon the property of our citizens.” This he felt certain could be done “without implicating the government.” And, in conclusion, he roundly

asserted: "Let it be signified to me through any channel (say Mr. J. Rhea) that the possession of the Floridas would be desirable to the United States, and in sixty days it will be accomplished."\* What reply, if any, was made to this letter will probably never be known. According to Monroe, he received it during an attack of illness, laid it away, forgot all about it, and did not even read it until after the war had come to an end. Jackson maintained, to the contrary, that the President had actually instructed Mr. Rhea (a Congressman from Tennessee) to write saying that his plan was approved, and that Rhea's reply was received by him before he crossed the border.† Whatever the truth, across the border he went, in March, 1818, at the head of an army of about three thousand, including a thousand of his veteran Tennesseans and rather less than a thousand friendly Indians.

There were to be no half-way measures now.

\* This letter is printed in Jackson's "Exposition" of his conduct in Florida, in Thomas Hart Benton's "Thirty Years' View," vol. I, pp. 167-180. The "Exposition" is one of the most interesting features of Benton's work, which contains much of value to the student of American expansion, especially in connection with the acquisition of Florida, Texas, Oregon, and California.

† Professor Schouler has reviewed the controversy in detail in a paper contributed to *The Magazine of American History*, vol. XII, pp. 308-322. His conclusion is that "Monroe never read nor reflected upon Jackson's letter at all until after Pensacola had fallen."

Writing to Captain McKeever, commissioned to co-operate with him by sea, Jackson designated St. Mark's as the first point of attack, instructed McKeever to meet him there, and significantly added: "You will . . . capture and make prisoners all, or every person, or description of persons, white, red, or black, with all their goods, chattels, and effects, together with all crafts, vessels, or means of transportation by water. . . . Any of the subjects of His Catholic Majesty sailing to St. Mark's may be permitted freely to enter the said river. But none to pass out, unless after an examination it may be made to appear that they have not been attached to or in any wise aided and abetted our common enemy."\* The meaning of this language was plain enough. To blockade Spanish ports, to seize Spanish property, and to make prisoners of Spanish subjects — such was Jackson's program. Incidentally, he proposed capturing, if possible, certain Englishmen at whose door he laid the chief responsibility for the present Indian rising, and who, he had reason to believe, were then at St. Mark's, together with two Indian chieftains who had proved especially malevolent.

\* Jackson to McKeever, in Parton's "The Life of Andrew Jackson," vol. II, p. 448.

To St. Mark's, then, he hastened, as did McKeever, the latter scrupling not to sail into the bay under the English flag, and by this disgraceful ruse lure aboard the chieftains for whose lives Jackson thirsted. Jackson's own course was openness itself. Frankly informing the Spanish commandant that so long as the struggle with the Indians lasted it would be necessary to occupy St. Mark's with American troops, he marched his men into the town, hauled down the Spanish flag, and raised in its stead the Stars and Stripes. No damage was done to person or property, and only one prisoner taken — a Scotchman, Alexander Arbuthnot, an aged Indian trader who was suspected of having intrigued against American interests. Next day, without so much as the semblance of a trial, McKeever's native captives were hanged, a fate which they richly deserved; and a start was made at once for the Indian stronghold of Suwanee, far to the east and in the midst of swamps accounted impassable. A week of arduous marching and the goal was reached, too late, however, to surprise the Indians, who had taken hurried flight, warned by a note that Arbuthnot had despatched to his son, also a trader. The town destroyed, back went Jackson to St. Mark's, taking with him as prisoner an Englishman, Robert

Ambrister, a gentleman of family but not of the best of reputations, who by mischance wandered into the American camp.

At St. Mark's once more, not a moment was lost in placing Arbuthnot and Ambrister on trial for their lives. "It is all-important," Jackson had written McKeever, "that these men should be captured and made examples of," and the failure of the expedition to Suwanee had not disposed him to modify in any way the merciless course mapped out in that letter. Arbuthnot stood charged with inciting the Indians to war against the United States, supplying them with munitions of war, and acting as a spy; Ambrister was accused of personally making war against the United States, and aiding the enemies of the United States. There was no particularly strong evidence against either, yet the court martial that tried them sentenced both to death, Arbuthnot to be hanged, Ambrister to be shot. In Ambrister's case the sentence was afterwards commuted by the court martial to flogging and a year's imprisonment, but Jackson, who seemed for the moment to have given way completely to the violence of his passions, ordered the original sentence to be carried into effect. Thus two British subjects perished, on the soil of a friendly

Power, and at the arbitrary command of an armed representative of a third Power, with which both the others were supposed to be at peace.\*

Now word was brought to the still unappeased Jackson, that a large number of Indians said to be more than five hundred in all, had sought refuge at Pensacola, and were receiving asylum there. Foaming with rage, he detached from his main body a mixed force of regulars and Tennesseans, and set off to the West Floridian capital fast as his troops could march. Nor did he halt on receipt of a letter from the Spanish Governor protesting in the name of the King of Spain against his invasion of that monarch's territory, and threatening to expel him unless he withdrew at once. His only reply was to urge his men to greater speed. Arrived at Pensacola, whence the Governor fled precipitately to Fort Barrancas, he mastered that town as easily as he had mastered St. Mark's, ran up the American flag, and quickly forced the surrender of Barrancas with the Governor and three hundred Spanish troops. All Florida now lay at his mercy, prostrate and helpless; but, contenting himself with leaving garrisons in the captured forts, he recrossed the border

\* The evidence given at the trial will be found in "American State Papers — Foreign Relations," vol. IV, pp. 580-596.

in a few days with the bulk of his army, confident that what he had already accomplished would be quite sufficient to bring Spain to terms.

He was hardly prepared for the storm that at once burst about his head. Not only in England, Spain, and European countries generally was he denounced as a bandit, a murderer, and a high-handed violator of the laws of nations, but in his own country he found himself the target for unrestrained abuse. It mattered not that the public at large applauded his actions and sang his praises as a true American who would dare and do whenever national interests required. The President, the Cabinet, and Congress, fearful that war with both England and Spain was certain to eventuate, debated long and earnestly the best way out of what seemed to them an exceedingly bad business. Throughout the summer Cabinet meetings were held almost daily, and at these Jackson's sole defender was the Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams. All save Adams were for disavowing his conduct *in toto* and making suitable reparation; but Adams, with an inflexibility that would have done credit to Jackson himself, insisted that the necessities of the case amply justified Jackson's proceedings, and that, in the last analysis, the responsibility lay not at his door but at the door of

the Spanish commanding officers in Florida. In the end, but only after a prolonged struggle, Adams won his point; and the United States made known to the world its intention of standing by the fiery warrior from Tennessee, whatever the consequences.

The consequences were the tacit approval by England of his execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, and the cession of Florida by Spain. To the latter result Adams again contributed powerfully and most of all by a letter he wrote in November, 1818, ostensibly addressed to the American Minister at Madrid, but in reality being in the nature of an ultimatum to the Spanish Government. Seldom indeed has an American statesman penned a more noteworthy document. Reviewing in the fullest detail the long-standing grievances of the United States against Spain, the repeated breaches of neutrality, the outrages committed by Indians, fugitive slaves, and outlaws who found sanctuary in Spain's dominions, her toleration of the acts of aliens like Nicholls, Arbuthnot, and Ambrister, and her constant failure to fulfil treaty obligations, Adams declared bluntly: "Spain must immediately make her election either to place a force in Florida at once adequate for the protection of her territory and to the fulfilment of her engagements, or cede to the United

States a province of which she retains nothing but the nominal possession, but which is, in fact, a derelict, open to the occupancy of every enemy, civilized or savage, of the United States, and serving no other earthly purpose than as a point of annoyance to them. . . . The duty of this Government to protect the persons and property of our fellow-citizens on the borders of the United States is imperative — it *must* be discharged.”\* There was no mistaking such language, and there was no denying the fact that so long as the United States held men like Andrew Jackson, Spain could not hope to keep to her old ways with impunity. Alive at last to the dangers of the situation, and well aware that it was impossible for her to maintain an efficient government in Florida, she announced her willingness to negotiate a treaty of cession, which was finally concluded and signed in Washington, February 22, 1819; its definite ratification, however, being delayed for various reasons until two years afterwards. July 10, 1821, the United States formally took possession, having already, fittingly enough, appointed as the first Governor of its new Territory the victorious Andrew Jackson.

\* John Quincy Adams to George W. Erving, in “American State Papers — Foreign Relations,” vol. IV, p. 544.

It remains to be added that by the terms of the treaty the seed was sown for another harvest of trouble. In addition to the actual transfer of territory, the monetary consideration for which was five million dollars to be paid by the United States, not to Spain, but to American claimants having bills against Spain for damages dating back in some instances to the first Napoleonic war, the Florida treaty fixed for the first time the boundaries of the region acquired by the United States in the Louisiana Purchase. Here a distinct concession was made by the United States, which began negotiations with the claim that in the southwest Louisiana extended to the Rio Grande, but ended by accepting the Sabine as the boundary line in that direction. Thus, to the intense indignation of the Western settlers, whatever title the United States had to the fertile plains of Texas was specifically relinquished. On the other hand, Spain relinquished no less specifically her shadowy claim to the so-called Oregon country in the northwest — the vast expanse of territory bounded by the Rockies, the Pacific, California, and Russian North America. Both relinquishments, as we shall see, were soon to prove disturbing elements in the political life of the American nation.

## CHAPTER IV

### SAM HOUSTON AND THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS

FOLLOWING the acquisition of Florida an entirely new period opens in the history of the territorial growth of the United States. Inevitability is still the dominant characteristic of the expansion movement; but now it is conditioned, and most powerfully, by an element that had little or no influence in the earlier acquisitions. This was the element of sectionalism, born of the institution of slavery. Prior to the treaty of 1819, by which Florida became a part of the United States, the urgent necessity of combined action against external dangers had prevented any clear appreciation of the inherent conflict of interests between the slaveholding and the non-slaveholding States. But with the removal of outside pressure came prompt recognition of the internal issue raised by the presence of slavery; and thereafter, from the moment of the so-called Missouri Compromise of 1820 to the historic secession forty years later, the drift into sectionalism was steadily

accentuated. In the intervening period three territorial acquisitions of great magnitude were made, each of which was intimately connected, though in different ways, with the growing determination of one section of the country to restrict slavery, and of the other to extend it.

In the case of Texas, the first of these acquisitions, sectionalism operated both to promote and to delay what is now universally accounted a most desirable addition to the Union. The American colonization of Texas would have been less rapid had not the Missouri Compromise, with its clause forbidding the creation of new slave States in the Louisiana Purchase territory north of the southern boundary of Missouri, forced the slaveholders of the South to thoughts of expansion. And, on the other hand, the annexation of Texas would have been accomplished far sooner had not its championship by the friends of slavery aroused the foes of slavery to lively opposition. This is not saying that its accomplishment must be considered a triumph for sectionalism over nationalism. Long before the interjection of the slavery issue into the annexation movement, there was ample evidence of a national desire for the possession of Texas. Repeated attempts were made to secure it, first, on the ground that it was really a

part, not of Spanish Mexico, but of French Louisiana, and hence that title to it had passed to the United States with the Louisiana Purchase; and afterwards, this claim being relinquished in the Florida treaty, by offers from the Government to purchase it from Mexico.

There can be no doubt, either, that once Mexico departed from the traditional Spanish policy of hostility to alien colonization and admitted American settlers within the confines of Texas, her hold of that province was doomed. She had had warning enough to avoid this suicidal step. Ever since the Mississippi Valley folk, in the closing years of the eighteenth century, had learned of the riches and fertility, the splendid skies and noble streams, of the prairie plains that stretched from the Sabine to the Rio Grande, there had come into Texas a succession of adventurers spying out the land and striving to snatch it from the feeble grasp of Spain. One and all of these adventurers, from Philip Nolan in 1800 to James Long in 1819,\* had failed in their attempts; but only because they had taken absurdly inade-

\* A brief but excellent account of these invasions will be found in George P. Garrison's "Texas." They are treated in greater detail in Henderson Yoakum's "History of Texas from its First Settlement," which has been reprinted with helpful notes in Dudley G. Wooten's "Comprehensive History of Texas." See also Hubert H. Bancroft's "History of the Pacific States of North America," vol. XI.

quate means to the end in view. Any really effective force would have made short work of the Spanish troops scattered through the widely separated presidios. Nevertheless, ignorant or heedless of the true significance of these filibustering expeditions, the Mexicans, so soon as they had themselves mastered their Spanish rulers and established an independent, if extraordinarily turbulent, republic, threw open the gates that had so long been shut and invited whomsoever would to enter and settle in Texas.

Credit for bringing about this change in policy belongs in chief measure to a Connecticut Yankee, Moses Austin, and his son Stephen. It was the father who, in the year of the Florida treaty, conceived the idea of persuading the then moribund Spanish Government to grant him a tract of land for the establishment of a colony; and it was the son's distinction to obtain from the Mexican Government a confirmation of the Spanish grant and to plant the first American settlement in Texas. There is nothing to show that either of the Austins or their colonists were inspired by the sinister motives some would attribute to them. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that they were simply frontiersmen desirous of bettering their condition and persuaded that they would have an excellent chance

to do this in a land that boasted more than two hundred and fifty thousand square miles of verdant farming country and a white population of only four thousand. Into Texas, therefore, they went, and fast on their heels followed others, attracted by a succession of liberal colonization laws which exempted settlers from all taxes and customs duties for a long term of years. Thus it resulted that within less than a decade after the arrival of Austin's first contingent of immigrants the four thousand whites had risen to twenty thousand, of whom the vast majority were Americans. Unquestionably, Mexico might well hope to attain her aim of populating and developing her unoccupied territories.

But it was not so certain that she was pursuing a policy entirely to her advantage. In fact, she soon began to suspect, though at first dimly, that a mistake had been made in permitting the growth within her borders of a community alien from her in blood, institutions, and points of view. Complete realization of the danger to which she had exposed herself was forced upon her by the obvious eagerness of the American Government to add Texas to the already colossal dominions of the United States. At the time of the execution of the Florida treaty no one, except possibly Henry Clay and Thomas Hart

Benton, had been more opposed than John Quincy Adams to the concession accepting the Sabine instead of the Rio Grande as the southwest boundary of the Louisiana territory; and with the election of Adams to the Presidency an effort was at once begun to effect a more favorable readjustment. Scarcely had Adams entered into office when instructions were sent to Joel R. Poinsett, the American Minister to Mexico, to sound the Mexican Government on the possibility of its ceding at least part of Texas to the United States; and two years later, in 1827, Poinsett was directed to make a definite offer of one million for all Texas, a proposal which he refused to make, knowing that it would meet with instant refusal.\* In another two years, however, and under most significant circumstances, the subject was officially and definitely broached to the Mexican authorities.

Andrew Jackson was now President, the man who had already compelled one territorial surrender to the United States. At that time he had differed

\* The authority for this statement is Henry Clay who, writing in *Niles' National Register*, April 17, 1844, stated that Poinsett "forebore even to make an overture for that purpose. Upon his return to the United States he informed me, at New Orleans, that his reason for not making it was that he knew the purchase was wholly impracticable, and that he was persuaded that if he made the overture it would have no other effect than to aggravate irritations, already existing, upon matters of difference between the two countries."

from Adams and Clay and Benton in the matter of the southwest boundary, but since then his views had completely changed and he yielded to none in the whole-heartedness of his desire to secure Texas. It was his profound conviction, summed up in a private letter written in after years, that "the safety as well as the perpetuation of our glorious Union depends upon the retrocession of the whole of that country, as far as the ancient limits of Louisiana, to the United States."\* In this conviction he acted precisely as Adams had done before him, sending to the reluctant Poinsett, who was still the unenvied representative of the United States in Mexico, instructions to make an offer of purchase, bidding as high as five million dollars if necessary.†

The moment might well have seemed propitious. Mexico was threatened by a Spanish expedition, bent on reconquest; she was weakened by her incessant revolutions; and she was sadly in need of funds. Yet, with a promptitude which disconcerted Poinsett, though it did not surprise him, she spurned the offer, greatly to the wrath of the imperious Jackson, but equally to the satisfaction of not a few of Jack-

\* Jackson to W. B. Lewis, in Cyrus T. Brady's "The True Andrew Jackson," p. 284.

† Van Buren to Poinsett, in "House Executive Document No. 42, Twenty-fifth Congress, First Session," pp. 10-16.

son's fellow-countrymen. For, in the short space of time which had elapsed since Adams made his overtures, sectional opposition had begun to crystallize with the dawning suspicion that the annexation of Texas might weaken, not strengthen, the Union, by giving the people of the slave States an opportunity to evade the consequences of the Missouri Compromise and obtain political ascendancy in the councils of the nation. Already the voice of the free States could be heard asserting, in the words of the "New England Palladium": "The acquisition and settlement of Texas, a country of surprising fertility, embracing three hundred thousand square miles and capable of supporting a population of seven or eight millions, would be highly advantageous to our trade and manufactures. Those advantages would remain to us even in case the creation of the acquired territory into States should lead to a dissolution of the Union. But as long as the integrity of the Union is considered as paramount to any consideration of commercial advantage, so long will the proposed purchase of Texas be opposed by New England." \*

\* *The New England Palladium*, September 22, 1829. See also an editorial on the same subject in the issue of September 29. This newspaper is very useful for a study of the Texas question during these early years, and particularly of Sam Houston's connection with the annexa-

This was in 1829, the year of Jackson's futile offer to buy; and before the year had sped the "Palladium" was congratulating its readers that the possibility of annexation had become too remote for consideration. But exactly at this juncture the arrival at Washington of Sam Houston, sometime Governor of Tennessee and all-time friend of Andrew Jackson, brought upon the scene the one man whom destiny was holding in reserve to win Texas for the United States. Fresh from the wilds of Arkansas he came, in January, 1830, clad in picturesque Indian garb, hopeful of enlisting Jackson's influence in securing a government contract, and, though perhaps less hopefully, eager to set on foot a most ambitious project for gaining possession of the region Mexico had bluntly refused to sell. "I

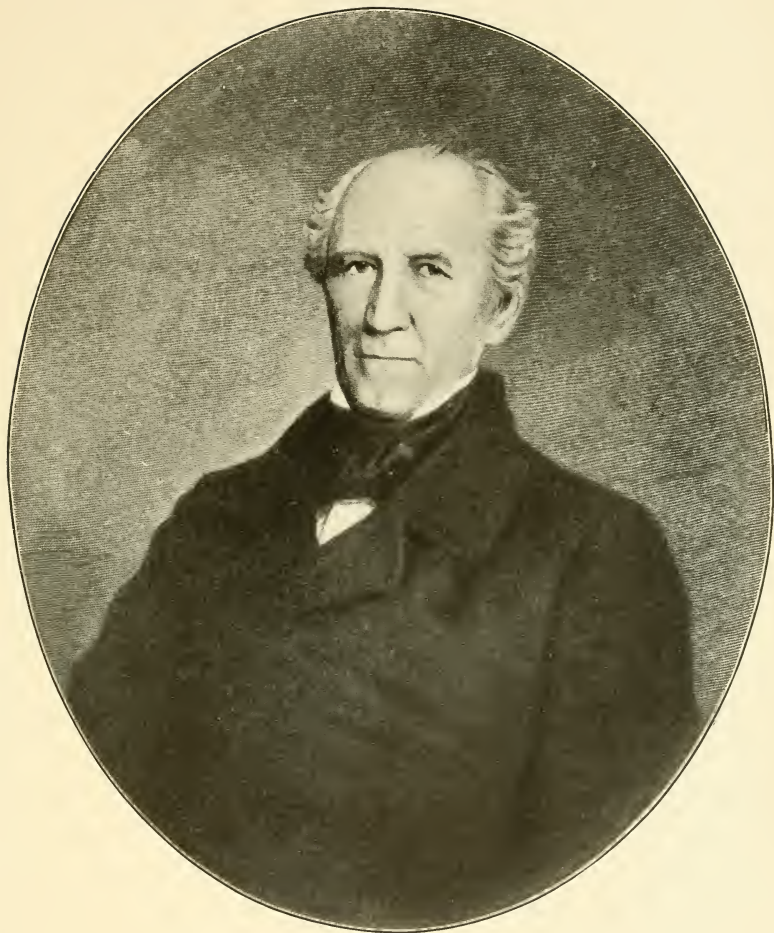
tion movement in its initial stages. The files of the *Palladium* for 1829 and 1830 show that there was a wide-spread impression that Houston was even then actively filibustering to win Texas for the United States. Thus, in the issue of October 20, 1829, we read — "*The Political Grid-iron*, a Louisiana paper, wishes to embroil the Texas. The United States, it says, should take possession of Texas without delay, and if General Houston has gone to that country, as is asserted, for the purpose of revolutionizing it, we may expect to hear shortly of his raising his flag." In the issue of November 17, 1829, the *Palladium* reports that "the Legislature of Arkansas is in session. Governor Pope hopes and expects the purchase of the Texas. He says nothing will be wanting, on the part of the President, to add to the strength, security, and prosperity of the western country." It may not be amiss to add that Pope was an appointee of Jackson's, having been named Governor of Arkansas March 9, 1829, or only five days after Jackson's inauguration as President.

learned from him," recorded Dr. Robert Mayo, with whom Houston lived at the celebrated "Brown's Hotel" in Washington, "that he was organizing an expedition against Texas; to afford a cloak to which he had assumed the Indian costume, habits, and associations, by settling among them in the neighborhood of Texas. That nothing was more easy to accomplish than the conquest and possession of that extensive and fertile country, by the co-operation of the Indians in the Arkansas Territory, and recruits among the citizens of the United States. And that in his view it would hardly be necessary to strike a blow to wrest Texas from Mexico." \*

Now, while Mayo is not altogether a credible witness, and while there is cause for suspecting that in the detailed account of the "conspiracy" which he hastened to lay before President Jackson he drew somewhat on the resources of an exuberant imagination, there is no doubting, in the light of subsequent events, that he told the truth so far as concerned Houston's personal intentions, and that Jackson himself was cognizant of, and secretly connived at, his old friend's schemes against the peace of Mexico. In Jackson's case, we must believe, the

\* Robert Mayo, in Parton's "Life of Andrew Jackson," vol. III, p. 654.

motive was purely patriotic. In Houston's, however, another consideration entered — the desire for self-vindication. His had been a strangely romantic and pathetic career. He was born, in 1793, of humble parentage, like Jackson himself; his birth-place being a farmhouse in an outlying Virginia settlement. On both his father's and his mother's side he was of the so-called Scotch-Irish stock — tracing his ancestry, that is to say, to Scotland via Ireland — and thus he inherited a double share of the Scotch-Irish compound of assertiveness, pugnacity, obstinacy, independence, endurance, and reckless daring. For the better part of his boyhood he led a life of restless roaming that might have made of him a second Boone; but his father's death, and the removal of his mother to a new home in the heart of the Tennessee wilderness, brought him a greatly needed corrective in the way of hard work. At infrequent intervals he attended school, and one day, the story goes, there fell into his hands a copy of Pope's "Iliad," which so fired his youthful imagination that when the attempt was made to apprentice him to a trade he ran away and took refuge with some friendly Cherokees, whose chieftain adopted him. Here he remained, with only occasional visits to his mother, until the outbreak of the War of 1812;



SAM HOUSTON

From a portrait painted by F. B. Carpenter in 1855, and now owned by Mr. Clarence W. Bowen, New York.



and then, chancing to meet a recruiting sergeant, he gladly donned a United States army uniform, and went in quest of adventures and glory.

Both he found speedily, his most notable achievement being at the battle of Horseshoe Bend, where Jackson crushed forever the power of the Creeks and took a fearful vengeance for the massacre at Fort Mims. Sorely wounded, and ordered by Jackson himself to withdraw to the rear, young Houston, determined to win fame or death, deliberately disobeyed the order, fighting until he fell with two bullets in him. C. Edwards Lester, his best known biographer, who wrote under Houston's personal supervision, has drawn a graphic picture of the part he played in this famous battle. The regiment to which he was attached had been ordered to storm the breastworks erected by the Creeks. Houston, by this time an ensign, plunged forward with his company. "While he was scaling the works, or soon after he reached the ground, a barbed arrow struck deep into his thigh. He kept his ground for a moment till his lieutenant and men were by his side, and the warriors had begun to recoil under their desperate onset. He then called to his lieutenant to extract the arrow, after he had tried in vain to do it himself. The officer made two unsuccessful

attempts and failed. 'Try again,' said Houston, the sword with which he was still keeping the command raised over his head, 'and if you fail this time I will smite you to the earth.' With a desperate effort he drew forth the arrow, tearing the flesh as it came. A stream of blood rushed from the place, and Houston crossed the breastworks to have his wound dressed.

"The surgeon bound it up and stanchd the blood, and General Jackson, who came up to see who had been wounded, recognizing his young ensign, ordered him firmly not to return. Under any other circumstances Houston would have obeyed any order from the brave man who stood over him, but now he begged the general to allow him to return to his men. General Jackson ordered him most peremptorily not to cross the breastworks again. But Houston was determined to die in that battle or win the fame of a hero. . . . Rushing once more to the breastworks, he was in a few seconds at the head of his men.

"The action had now become general, and more than two thousand men were struggling hand to hand. Arrows and spears and balls were flying, swords and tomahawks were gleaming in the sun, and the whole peninsula rang with the yell of the

savage and the groans of the dying. . . . Not a warrior offered to surrender, even while the sword was at his breast. Hundreds had already fallen, and were weltering in their gore — multitudes of others had been shot or drowned in attempting to swim the river. . . . But the victory was still incomplete — the work of slaughter was not yet done. A large party of Indians had secreted themselves in a part of the breastworks, constructed over a ravine in the form of the roof of a house, with narrow port-holes from which a murderous fire could be kept up whenever the assailants should show themselves. Here the last remnant of the Creek warriors of the peninsula were gathered, and as the artillery could not be brought to bear upon the place, they could be dislodged only by a bold charge, which would probably cost the life of the brave men who made it.

“An offer of life if they would surrender had been rejected with scorn by these brave, desperate savages, which sealed their fate. General Jackson now called for a body of men to make the charge. As there was no order given, the line stood still, and not an officer volunteered to lead the forlorn hope. Supposing some captain would lead forward his company, Houston would wait no longer. Calling on his platoon to follow him, he dashed down the

precipitous descent towards the covered ravine. But his men hesitated. With a desperation which belongs only to such occasions, he seized a musket from one of his men, and, leading the way, ordered the rest to follow him. There was but one way of attack that could prevail — it was to charge through the port-holes, although they were bristling with rifles and arrows, and it had to be done by a rapid, simultaneous plunge. As he was stopping to rally his men, and had leveled his musket, within five yards of the port-holes, he received two rifle-balls in his right shoulder, and his arm fell shattered to his side. Totally disabled, he turned and called once more to his men, and implored them to make the charge. But they could not advance. Houston stood in his blood till he saw it would do no good to stand any longer, and then went beyond the range of the bullets, and sank down exhausted to the earth." \*

For months his recovery was uncertain, but when he was able to be up and about he quickly discovered in Jackson, who had readily forgiven his disobedience but had not forgotten his heroism, a friend eager to assist in the advancement of his interests.

\* C. Edwards Lester's "Sam Houston and His Republic." Edition of 1846, pp. 20-22.

Resigning from the army and embracing the practise of law, with the powerful influence of Jackson constantly behind him, he gained immediate recognition as one of the coming men of Tennessee. He had been barely twenty-one years old, an utterly unknown frontier lad, at the battle of the Horseshoe; before he reached the age of thirty-one he was elected Major-General of the State militia and member of the National House of Representatives; and he was not yet thirty-five when a tidal wave of popular enthusiasm carried him into the Governorship of Tennessee, even against the candidacy of the famous war Governor, William Blount.

But now, on the very eve, as it seemed, of still greater honors, the entire current of his life was changed by a domestic affliction. Deserted by his wife, accused by the tongue of scandal, and hounded by enemies, he took the amazing step of resigning from office, abandoning civilization, and seeking an asylum among the Cherokees to whom he had fled in boyhood. There, for a time, heedless of the outside world, he gave himself over to hunting and to drowning his sorrows in libations that quickly earned for him among his tawny companions the nickname of "Drunken Sam." But this lasted for only a time. Ere the year was out he was on his

way to Washington, to visit the friend who had never failed him, and to find if possible a means of proving to friend and foe alike that the career which had promised so well was not completely blasted.

It was nearly three years later, however, before Houston actually set foot on the soil of Texas; the delay being due, in part at any rate, to his persistence in seeking the contract which, despite all of Jackson's influence, was steadily denied him. In the meantime, while he was alternating between Washington and his wigwam home in Arkansas, the shadow of his former self, without reputation, without means, and without friends other than the few who, like Jackson, saw in him only the hero of Horseshoe Bend, the situation in Texas was steadily growing more favorable to his undertaking. Jackson's offer had thoroughly aroused the Mexicans to the necessity of checking the inflow of American colonization, and with unwonted unanimity they resolved on action to vindicate and maintain their authority in their northern province. Their first move was the issuance of a decree abolishing slavery in Mexico. Though couched in general terms, the decree practically affected Texas alone, and was intended to discourage further immigration from the Southern States, whence most of the colonists had come. It

was soon, however, rescinded to all intents and purposes;\* but following it, early in 1830, the Mexican Congress enacted a sweeping law providing for the establishment of Mexican colonies, military posts, and customs offices in the border provinces; prohibiting further colonization by immigrants from adjacent countries; and forbidding the importation of slaves. It has been well said that from the passage of this law can be traced the growth of discontent in Texas. It was aimed only at the Texans, or rather at the now dreaded Americanization of Texas, and no time was lost in giving it effect. Troops were hurried to the American settlements, guards stationed along the frontier to keep out slaves and turn back prospective immigrants, customs collections were begun, and all but two of the Texas ports were closed.

To the Texans, hitherto in the enjoyment of a degree of liberty amounting almost to license, these measures were galling in the extreme, and a spirit of uneasiness and resentment rapidly took possession of them. But, with admirable restraint, they held themselves well in hand until some of their leading men were imprisoned on trivial charges. Then, pretending that they wished to aid Santa

\* See Garrison's "Texas," pp. 172-73.

Anna, the leader of the latest Mexican revolution, they rose in arms and attacked the recently established garrisons, disbanding only after the last Mexican soldier had fled across the border. It was at this moment, when all was confusion, uncertainty, and indignation, that Houston arrived in Texas. The purpose of his coming seems to have been well understood, for at the frontier town of Nacogdoches he received a warm welcome and an urgent invitation to settle there. He learned that a convention was soon to meet for a discussion of the situation, and further information prompted him to despatch to Jackson an enthusiastic letter declaring that then, if ever, was the time to acquire Texas, and that nineteen twentieths of the population of the province were eager for annexation to the United States.\* In this he greatly erred, for, as a matter of fact, the Texans as yet had no intention of making a definite, clear-cut stand for separation from Mexico. That

\* Houston added — "Now is a very important crisis for Texas. As relates to her future prosperity and safety, as well as the relations which it [*sic*] is to bear to the United States, it is now in the most favorable attitude, perhaps, that it can be to obtain it on fair terms. England is pressing her suit for it, but its citizens will resist if any transfer should be made of them to any Power but the United States. I have traveled nearly five hundred miles across Texas, and am now enabled to judge pretty correctly of the soil and resources of the country, and I have no hesitancy in pronouncing it the finest country, for its extent, upon the globe. . . . It is probable that I may make Texas my abiding place.

they would ultimately do so was beyond question, in view of the irreconcilable contradiction between the instinctive love of freedom which was part of their Anglo-Saxon heritage and the innate despotism of their Mexican rulers. But their immediate desire was to effect a restoration of the conditions existing prior to the enforcement of the Act of 1830.

Meeting in convention in April, 1833, they drew up a petition for the repeal of its most obnoxious clauses and for permission to adopt a State constitution, which, it is significant to note, was drafted by a committee headed by Houston, and was thoroughly republican in form and spirit. Then ensued an anxious period. For six months their commissioner — none other than the "Father of Texas" himself, Stephen F. Austin — labored in vain to obtain a hearing; after which, when about to leave Mexico City with his mission unfulfilled, he was thrown into prison, where he lingered many weary months. This treatment, of course, enraged the Texans, and the revolutionary spirit steadily grew apace under the zealous fostering of Houston and minor agitators who were determined to force a separation. None the less, the evidence goes to

In adopting this course *I will never forget* the country of my birth." This letter, dated from Natchitoches, February 17, 1833, is printed in whole in Henry G. Bruce's "The Life of General Houston," pp. 81-83.

show that the "peace party," of which Austin was the most influential member, remained in the ascendant until as late as August, 1835. Then a crisis was precipitated by the news that the Mexican Government — now concentrated in the single person of Santa Anna — was planning to send a large army into Texas to break up the foreign settlements. With this the issue was squarely presented — war, or unconditional surrender — and from that time forward even the peace-loving Austin united his voice with Houston's in exhorting the Texans to resist to the death.

The story of the war that followed need not be told in detail. Despite the assistance received from the United States, in flagrant violation of the laws of neutrality, but in perfect accord with the laws of racial solidarity and blood relationship, it opened inauspiciously for the revolutionary cause. Fast on the heels of the ghastly Alamo massacre, when Travis, Bowie, Crockett, and their gallant comrades were butchered in cold blood by Santa Anna, came the similar horror at Goliad, with its death-roll of nearly four hundred. These merciless and unforgivable acts were doubtless designed to strike terror to the hearts of the revolutionists; but they only inspired a blind, unreasoning fury, and an unshak-



STEPHEN AUSTIN  
"The Father of Texas"

From a portrait in the possession of the Texas Historical Society.



able resolution to exact a bloody recompense. Such was the wrath of the Texans that they even turned against Houston, their military head, who, with a masterly generalship which they could not appreciate, was employing Fabian tactics to avoid a battle until reinforcements should reach him. Not the least of his triumphs was the success with which, heedless of taunts and protests, he beat down all opposition and compelled his rebellious followers to do his bidding. In the end the necessity of giving battle came sooner than he desired, but with it came also the vindication for which he had long been toiling, and the independence of Texas. April 21, 1836, near the San Jacinto River, was fought the decisive engagement of the war, when Houston and some eight hundred Texans overwhelmingly defeated twice their number of Mexicans and captured Santa Anna himself.

In gratitude for that victory, Houston — no longer the despised “Drunken Sam,” but universally acclaimed, and deservedly, as a man of transcendent abilities — was elected President of the Republic, which his valor, no less than his intriguing, had contributed to bring into existence. And now, having at the time of his election declared almost unanimously in favor of annexation with the United States,

the Texans confidently looked forward to an early admission into the greater republic of their native land. But in this they were doomed to bitter disappointment. The changed attitude of an influential section of the American people — indicated so long before as 1829 in the opposition aroused by Jackson's attempt to purchase Texas — had by this time solidified into a wide-spread and resolute hostility to the annexation movement. It was recognized that, if admitted at all, Texas would have to be admitted as a slave State, or States — rumor had it that she was to be carved into five or six States in the political interests of the slaveholding South — for she lay in the slave belt and had by constitutional provision established slavery as one of her institutions; and the increasingly numerous opponents of the slavery system had no intention of permitting it to intrench itself more firmly than ever in the United States. Moreover, there were many, like Adams and Benton, who, though expansionists of the first order, regarded the proposed measure as a spoliation of Mexico, and were accordingly opposed to it. So complicated was the situation, and so manifest had the drift into sectionalism become, that even the Texas-desiring Jackson shrank from a step which would certainly disrupt party lines and might

endanger the Union for whose "safety and perpetuation," paradoxically enough, he deemed the possession of Texas essential. As a result, the Texan commissioners, who, soon after the battle of San Jacinto, hurried to Washington to proffer annexation, met with a decided rebuff, as did the Texan Minister on renewing the offer in the following year, after the Government of the United States had recognized the independence of his country.

Time passed. Jackson's term of office expired; his nominee, the adroit Van Buren, reaped the sad harvest of a panic year and gave way to the ill-fated Harrison; and still the annexation of Texas seemed as far off as ever. It was, however, steadily becoming a livelier subject of public discussion. Several State legislatures adopted resolutions declaring for or against it, according as the State was slaveholding or non-slaveholding; and attempts were made to secure action by Congress, a vote on one occasion being prevented only by the filibustering of Adams, who occupied three weeks in the delivery of a single speech. This was in 1838, and it was not until 1843 that the friends of annexation really had reason to hope for success. Then the outlook perceptibly brightened, in part owing to the political ambitions of President Tyler, but still more as a result of the

artful diplomacy of President Houston, who had already proved himself as capable in statecraft as in military leadership.

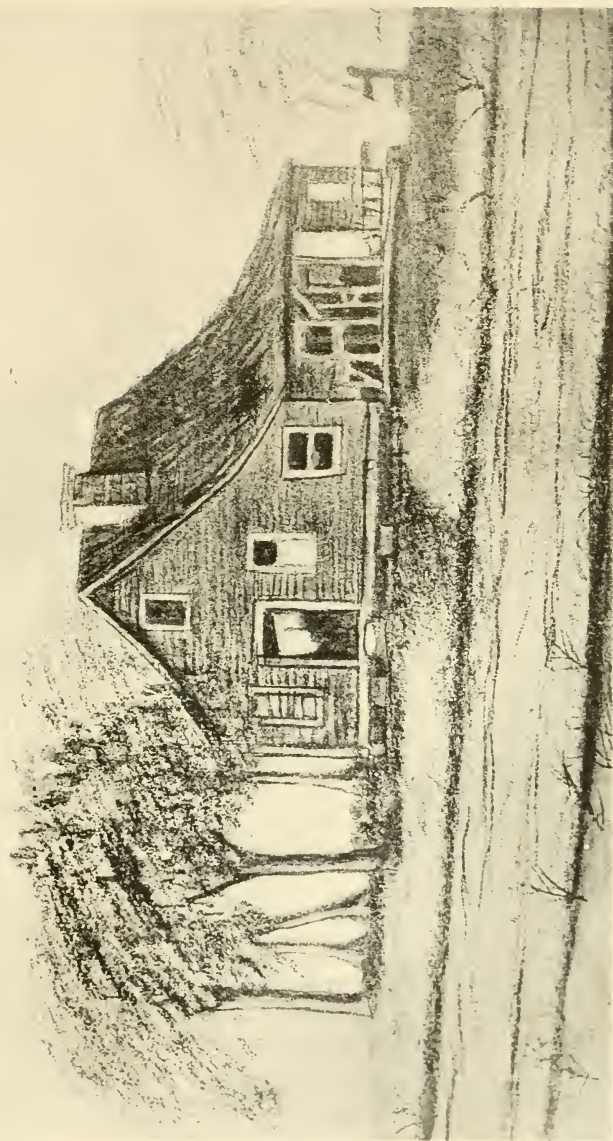
In December, 1841, after his election for a second term, he had again sounded the authorities at Washington with regard to the prospects for annexation, and upon receiving an unfavorable reply he adopted a well-assumed attitude of indifference and began to cultivate close relations with foreign Powers, notably Great Britain. Presently most disquieting reports reached the United States. It was said, among much else, that the British Government purposed using its influence in Texas to bring about the gradual abolition of slavery in all America, and thus protect the sugar and cotton industries of the East and West Indies from the competition of the United States. Improbable though it was, this story received wide credence, and action by the already willing Tyler, anxious at any cost to curry favor with the Democratic party, was hastened by the receipt of a notification from Houston that "the subject of annexation is no longer open to discussion." Promptly, but with great secrecy, negotiations were begun between the two Governments, and before long, to Houston's infinite satisfaction, a treaty of annexation was successfully formulated,

notwithstanding the angry protests of Mexico, which still cherished the vain hope of reconquering Texas.

But formulation was one thing, ratification another. Brought to a vote in the United States Senate, June 8, 1844, after annexation had been elevated to the dignity of a party issue, the treaty was decisively rejected by a vote of sixteen in favor of, and thirty-five opposed to, ratification. Nevertheless, Houston did not despair. The American people had yet to register their verdict, for one result of his diplomacy and of the "British intervention" stories had been to place the question of annexation among the vital questions of the rapidly approaching Presidential election, and he was confident that dread of foreign influence, coupled with the instinctive desire for expansion, would outweigh all other considerations in the minds of the majority. Here he was right, the comparatively unknown James K. Polk, on a platform declaring unreservedly for annexation, defeating the popular idol, Henry Clay. For Houston, as for Jackson watching the contest from his well-earned retirement in Tennessee, Polk's election was a personal triumph, a personal vindication, setting the seal of popular approval on the labors and policies of nearly two decades gone. Only a few months more and, though not by treaty

but by the novel method of a joint resolution of Congress, the Lone Star Republic was transformed into the American State of Texas.

This, properly speaking, is the point at which to bring our narrative to a close. Of the war with Mexico that followed we shall hear enough in the course of our study of the conquest of California. But it is impossible to resist the temptation to recall, however briefly, the splendid sequel to Houston's career as an expansionist. The eve of the Civil War found him Governor of Texas, after long and faithful service in the United States Senate; and found him, for well-nigh the first time, out of sympathy with the desires of his fellow-Texans. They were for secession — he was for the Union. Old in years, but fiery as ever, with the boldness, the bluntness, the patriotism, that had always marked his ways, he set himself manfully to conquer the popular will and hold Texas true to the cause which he deemed the greatest and best in the world. Failing, and with horror and anguish hearing his State declare in favor of the Confederacy, he made ready for a final struggle. He was Governor and he would stay Governor, owning allegiance to Texas but also to the Union. In vain his friends urged him either to swear fealty to the Confederacy or



CAPITOL OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

Photographed by J. B. Walker, from a crayon sketch owned by J. P. Underwood.



resign. He would do neither. And thus it came about that, after all his labors for Texas, he was deposed and expelled from office. Whereupon, in the words of one who knew him well, "he retired to his prairie home, and, planting upon his log cabin a single four-pounder, he told his State 'to go to ruin if she pleased, but she should not drag him along with her.' He had made and saved her, and if she would be unmade, it should be her work — not his." The pity that the weary giant did not live to learn that Texas had not been unmade! He died July 26, 1863, three weeks after Grant had captured Vicksburg.

## CHAPTER V

### THOMAS HART BENTON AND THE OCCUPATION OF OREGON

THE annexation of Texas by joint resolution of Congress was formally completed on the first day of March, 1845. Out of the hostilities with Mexico that followed, the United States gained another large territorial increase, at one bound crossing the Rocky Mountains and spanning the enormous area between the Rockies and the Pacific. But the Mexican War did not give the United States her first foothold on the Pacific. That came with the establishment of the American title to Oregon in 1846, and was secured, not by a bloody conquest, but by the peaceful methods of diplomacy.

For a time, indeed, the settlement of the so-called Oregon Question — carrying with it ownership of the immense tract of territory stretching along the Pacific from California to Alaska, then Russian America — seemed impossible without resort to arms. Yet, singularly enough, until that time the great danger was that the United States would,

through sheer negligence, lose what undoubtedly belonged to her. The problem was very different from that presented by Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and the later acquisitions still to be discussed. It was not a case of obtaining territory by purchase or force of arms, but one of vindicating title to a region also claimed by another nation. Originally, in fact, and before the United States became a party to the dispute, no fewer than four Powers were rival claimants to the Oregon country — Spain, France, Russia, and Great Britain. Of these the first and last alone had any substantial foundation for their claims, and this as regarded only isolated sections of the territory; but until 1790, when there was forced upon her the humiliating Nootka Sound convention conceding equal rights to Great Britain, Spain asserted sovereignty over the whole of Oregon. Two years later, with Robert Gray's discovery of the Columbia River and valley, the United States became an added claimant, strengthening her case in 1803 by the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, whereby she secured whatever rights France had, or fancied she had, in the country beyond the mountains; in 1805 by the explorations of the Lewis and Clark expedition; in 1811 by the founding of the trading-post of Astoria at the mouth of the Oregon; and in

1819 by the Florida Treaty, a clause of which, as was pointed out in a preceding chapter, transferred Spain's Oregon claims to the United States.

Nothing in all this gave the United States a right to claim the entire Oregon country — Spain's pretensions having really been blotted out long before the Florida Treaty by her abandonment of the region after the Nootka Sound convention of 1790 — but what it did give was a better title than any other nation could show to that part of Oregon comprising the rich valley of the Columbia and lying between the forty-second and forty-ninth parallels of latitude. This it was that the United States all but lost by reason of the indifference of the American Government and people. That both Government and people should have been indifferent is, however, not at all surprising. Oregon was a remote, inaccessible, unknown country, popularly supposed to be shut off from the United States by a vast plain of sun-parched desert and an impassable mountain barrier. So little was known of its resources and possibilities that it was accounted absolutely worthless for agriculture, and of value only for the fur trade.\* In the minds of many

\* The accuracy of this statement has been challenged by T. C. Elliott of Walla Walla, Washington, writing in *The Outlook*, vol. LXXXIX,

there was the suspicion, too, that the occupation and development of Oregon would work against the best interests of the Union, leading to a separation between the Americans on the east and the Americans on the west of the mountains. And, as the diplomatic struggle neared its close, an insidious and powerful opposition developed from the slaveholding Southern States, whose leaders feared that the provisions of the Missouri Compromise would be applied to Oregon, and additional free States be created from it.

Another and perhaps the greatest reason for the apathy which so long prevailed was the fact that the people did not feel any immediate need for Oregon. The economic pressure which had compelled the first transmontane migration had not as yet made the second inevitable. On the contrary,

p. 869. But there is ample evidence to show that even the best informed Americans of the day knew remarkably little about Oregon. As late as 1845, to give a striking piece of testimony, we find the historian Bancroft, then about to take office as Secretary of the Navy, writing — "After dinner I left a card on J. C. Calhoun, and with Gilpin spent an hour with Benton and his most interesting son-in-law, Lieutenant Fremont. To hear him talk of the Oregon country seemed like being carried among snow-capped mountains of Switzerland; and his account of the valleys, and beautiful runs of water were almost enough to make you think that the garden of Eden was the other side of the mountains. I had no idea that there were so many ranges of mountains or so beautifully picturesque and inviting a region." In M. A. DeWolfe Howe's "The Life and Letters of George Bancroft," vol. I, pp.259-60.

the natural tendency of the time was to spread out and occupy the fertile tract about the Mississippi and its affluents made available by the Louisiana Purchase; and as a consequence, instead of progressing steadily westward, the current of migration took a northerly and southerly direction during the two decades intervening between the acquisition of Florida and the annexation of Texas, the occupation of Oregon, and the conquest of California. The westward tendency was further checked for the time being by the Congressional legislation removing the northern and southern Indians across the Mississippi, and thus throwing open to white settlement the lands formerly reserved for the "wards of the Nation." So late as 1840, or but six years before the United States definitely took possession of Oregon, the frontier line had been advanced only to the western boundary of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and Illinois, with a narrow belt of population extending into eastern Iowa and southern Wisconsin. With the enormous area beyond still open to settlement and exploitation, there was no compulsion to brave the dangers of the desert and the mountains for the sake of a home in an unknown and, as was generally believed, unfruitful land. The situation, in short, was such that had it not been

for the enthusiasm and persistency of a little group of agitators, expansionists of the true stamp, the whole of Oregon, from the Mexican to the Russian line, must unfailingly have become the prize of Great Britain.

The foremost of these agitators were John Floyd, Lewis F. Linn, and Thomas H. Benton, primacy among whom must unquestionably be given to Benton. Not only was he the first American statesman to perceive the danger of losing Oregon altogether, but to him belongs the greatest measure of the credit attaching to all who co-operated to bring the contest over Oregon to an honorable and peaceful issue. His voice, also, was the first raised in protest against the agreement by which, in 1818, the Governments of Great Britain and the United States, who with Russia were then the sole remaining disputants, agreed that Oregon should for the period of ten years be thrown open to settlement by both British subjects and American citizens. The convention of 1818, Benton angrily declared in newspaper articles written before he had entered into public life, "speaks as if there was a mutuality of countries on the northwest coast to which the article [providing for the joint occupation] was applicable, and a mutuality of benefits to accrue to

the citizens of both governments by each occupying the country claimed by the other. Not so the fact. There is but one country in question, and that is our own — and of this the British are to have equal possession with ourselves, and we no possession of theirs. The Columbia is ours; Frazer's River is a British possession to which no American ever went or ever will go. . . . There is no mutuality in anything. We furnish the whole stake — country, river, harbor; and shall not even maintain the joint use of our own. We shall be driven out of it, and the British remain sole possessors."\*

This outburst, repeated at frequent intervals during the many years the joint occupation lasted, was characteristic of the man. Dignified, ponderous, and pedantic, in outward semblance most unlike his fellow-Westerners, Benton was at heart a true Westerner, and never more so than in the ardor with which he dreamed of new fields for the American pioneer to conquer, new territorial acquisitions for the American nation to make. He was also one of the greatest statesmen the West, or for that matter the entire country, has ever produced. His worth has been obscured to posterity, as it was to his own generation, in part by his personal traits and in part

\* Benton's "Thirty Years' View," vol. I, pp. 109-110.

by the superior renown of his leader, Jackson, and his illustrious contemporaries, the triumvirate Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, but it would none the less be difficult to name an individual statesman who has labored more wisely and effectively for the future progress and prosperity of the United States. Extravagant some of his dreams may have been, and extravagant they certainly seemed to many of those who heard him propound them. Yet beneath even his most fanciful schemes was the solid substratum of hard common sense that made him the tireless champion of such vitally essential measures as the establishment of a sound monetary standard, the improvement of transportation facilities, and the development of the unoccupied territories of the Union.

He came logically by his expansionistic sentiments. Born in North Carolina in 1782, and, like Houston of Texas fame, migrating at an early age to Tennessee, the War of 1812 saw him in service first as one of Jackson's volunteers, and afterwards on the Canadian frontier. As luck would have it, he was given little opportunity to learn the art of warfare. But the tasks allotted to him afforded a comprehensive view of the extent and possibilities of the land of his birth, and in this way he became

inspired with the ambition to play a part in developing its resources and advancing it to headship among the nations of the world. His removal across the Mississippi and into Missouri, where he settled at St. Louis in 1815 and soon afterwards began to practise law, served to intensify this ambition.

He found himself in a veritable atmosphere of expansion. Trappers and hunters from all sections of the new West made their headquarters at St. Louis, then little more than a village, but a center from which all roads to the wilderness seemed to radiate; there was a constant coming and going of traders, each with his tale of marvels and riches in the distant parts where the sun was lost to view; the caravan of hopeful emigrants was a familiar sight. Giving full rein to his imagination, Benton availed himself of every means of learning more about the plains and prairies, which he believed would soon be populated by an army of lusty pioneers. Especially was his fancy drawn to the depths beyond the Rocky Mountains, his ardent vision already descrying the day when the American people would take their stand on the shores of the Pacific and confront the peoples of the ancient world. Little by little, from trapper and trader and explorer,

from the pathfinder William Clark himself, passing the evening of his life in St. Louis, he drew such a fund of information that soon not a man in the whole United States had equally profound knowledge of the far Northwest.

To be sure, Benton was at first among those who imagined that the Rockies must mark the western boundary of the United States, and that American colonization beyond the mountains would mean the creation of an independent Republic. But this did not deter him from urging such colonization, if only for the reason, to quote from a speech of after years, that Oregon "should be possessed by our descendants who will be our friends, and not by aliens who will be our enemies."\* And soon, although, as is indicated by the quotation, he never quite shook off his separatistic fancies, he was preaching the occupation of Oregon on grounds connected solely with the increased power, prestige, and wealth that the United States would gain thereby. His opportunity came with his election in 1820 as one of Missouri's first two United States Senators. Arrived at Washington, he found at "Brown's Hotel," where he took rooms, Dr. John Floyd, a Virginia Congressman who, from a long residence in Kentucky, was deeply

\* Benton's "Thirty Years' View," vol. II, p. 430.

interested in all phases of Western development, and two old acquaintances who had been employed by John Jacob Astor to assist in the founding of Astoria. The four talked long and frequently concerning the situation in Oregon — or, to be more exact, in the Columbia Valley, in which alone they felt an interest — and it was resolved that assistance from the Government should be sought to overcome the advantage the British were gaining through the Hudson's Bay Company's policy of killing off American trade. Benton for the moment could do nothing, as he was precluded from taking his seat in the Senate pending the final decision with regard to admitting Missouri into the Union; but Floyd enthusiastically volunteered to initiate action in the House of Representatives.

His first step was taken in December, 1820, when he moved for an inquiry into the expediency of military occupation of the country about the Columbia, and succeeded in securing the appointment of a committee, of which he himself was made chairman, to report on his motion. Now began a patience-exhausting struggle which was to last more than a quarter of a century. January, 1821, the committee made its report, emphasizing the value of the Columbia Valley as a means of enlarging the commerce of

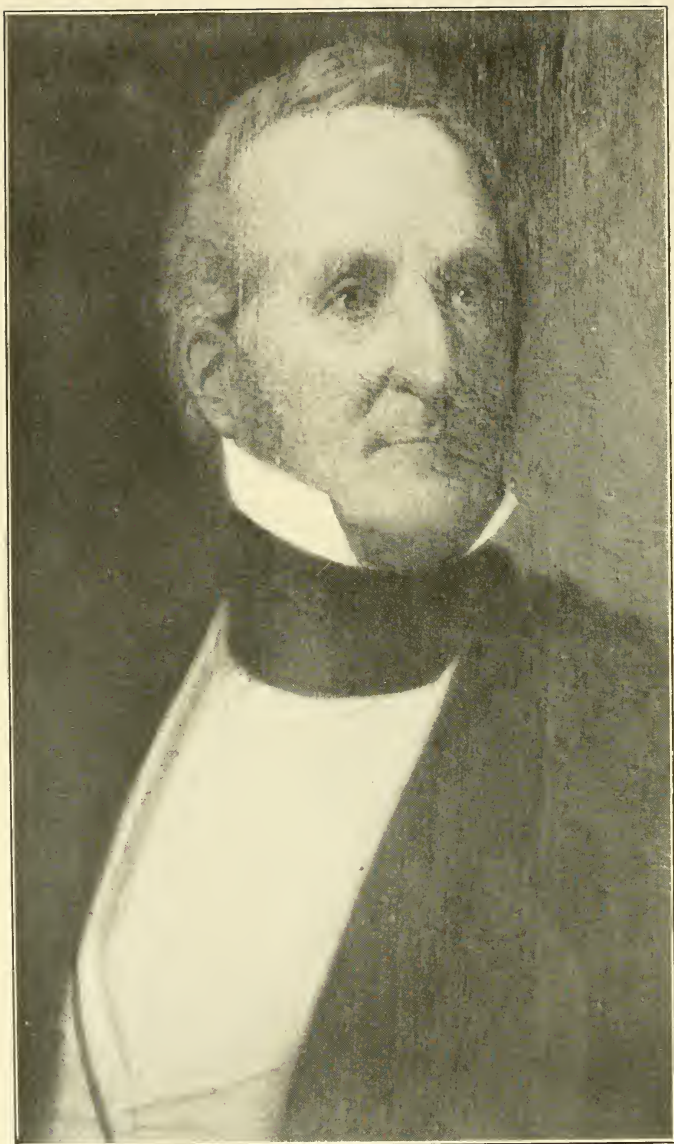
the United States — a favorite argument of Benton's — by providing a direct line of communication with China. At the same time the committee presented a bill authorizing official occupation, extinguishment of the Indian title, and provision for a government. But this measure was allowed to die without reaching a vote, and a like fate overtook a similar bill reported by the same committee in January, 1822. In no wise disheartened, Floyd returned to the attack, delivering late in the same year the first speech ever heard in Congress on the Oregon question. In a way, it was a masterly effort, making plain the advantages accruing from possession of the Columbia Valley, and advocating its occupation by United States troops. It awakened little enthusiasm, however, and was met by the declaration, to be heard frequently in the following years, that by extending the territory of the United States across the mountains the Union would be exposed to dismemberment and to increased chances of war.

Meantime, Missouri, after vexatious delays, had been granted admission, and Benton his seat in the Senate. Rising from that seat, in February, 1823, he served notice on his fellow-Senators, that unless immediate measures were taken to colonize and fortify the Columbia Valley all claim to it might as

well be abandoned. Hitherto, neither Floyd nor those who opposed Floyd had touched on the fact that the American title had been challenged by Great Britain on the ground of prior discovery and purchase from the Indians, but Benton in a ringing speech set forth the true state of affairs. Unhappily, he also indulged in grandiloquent and, as it seemed at the time, extravagant suggestions which only amused those who heard him. He would occupy the Columbia in order, for one thing, to carry the lights of religion, science, and free government to the "imprisoned and exuberant populations" of China and Japan, who might also find their "granary" in its smiling valley. And, with a fine outburst of new West indignation, he declared: "I, for one, had as lief see American ministers going to the Emperors of China and Japan, to the King of Persia, and even to the Grand Turk, as to see them dancing attendance upon those European legitimates who hold everything American in contempt and detestation."\* At which everybody in and out of the Senate, save those who shared Benton's faith in the trans-Pacific destinies of the United States, laughed heartily, and forgot all about the really vital issue of forestalling the British in the occupation of Oregon.

\* Benton's "Thirty Years' View," vol. I, p. 14.





THOMAS HART BENTON

From a portrait in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society.

In the House the zealous Floyd was more fortunate. On December 23, 1824, or more than four years after he had first brought the subject to the attention of his colleagues, he had the satisfaction of participating in the passage of a bill by which the President was authorized to occupy the Columbia Valley with a military force, and to set up a territorial government whenever he might find it expedient to do so. The Senate, however, had still to be reckoned with and the Senate proved obdurate, despite Benton's vehement pleadings; the decisive argument being advanced by Dickerson, of New Jersey, who asserted that military occupation would lead to a war with Great Britain, and justly, as an infraction of the convention of 1818 providing for joint occupation by the two countries. Upon this Benton, when the opportunity again offered, sought to attain his object by terminating the joint occupation. The ten-year period would come to an end in 1828, and he begged the Senate not to ratify any renewal of the agreement, but to insist instead on a settlement "on the basis of a separation of interests, and the establishment of a permanent boundary" between the English and American possessions west of the Rocky Mountains.

Again he was doomed to disappointment. By

the convention of 1818 the forty-ninth parallel had been accepted as the boundary between British North America and the United States from the Lake of the Woods to the base of the Rocky Mountains; but all attempts made by the United States to persuade the British Government to carry that line to the Pacific proved fruitless. Over the mountains it would indeed carry it, but only to the point where it touched the Columbia River, which was thence to form the boundary to the ocean. Thus Great Britain would gain a waterway and a large slice of territory to which the United States felt herself rightfully entitled. It was on this rock that negotiations were wrecked in 1818, leading to the joint occupation compromise; and for this reason failure again resulted when negotiations were resumed in 1826, after Russia had abandoned the contest and by treaty with both her rivals consented to accept the parallel of fifty-four degrees, forty minutes, as the southern boundary of her American possessions. The following year, as the only peaceful way out of the difficulty, it was agreed that the convention of 1818 should be renewed, not for a definite but an indefinite period, terminable on twelve months' notice by either party. This new convention, notwithstanding Benton's direful predictions, the Senate

duly ratified, only six Senators uniting with the champion of Oregon to vote against ratification.

Thereafter, with the exception of a futile effort by Floyd, in 1829, to secure the passage of a bill for the construction of forts west of the Rockies and the exploration of the region, the Oregon Question slumbered for nearly a decade so far as Congress was concerned. Floyd's withdrawal from the House left Oregon no champion there, and Benton, in the Senate, was too preoccupied with the more urgent business that now devolved upon him as exponent and advocate of the policies of President Jackson. But he did not lose sight of his country's transmontane interests, however much he might despair for them; and it is easy to imagine the satisfaction with which he followed and, so far as he could, promoted the extra-Congressional movement that soon set in and was ultimately to vindicate the American claims. It has already been observed that one of the reasons for the prevalent apathy was the lack of information respecting the resources and character of Oregon. To no small extent this was remedied by the publication of the detailed reports of the legislative committees appointed from time to time to inquire into the subject. Enlightenment also came through the tales carried home by the explorers

who, beginning with the discovery of the famous South Pass through the Rockies in 1823, ranged all through the Columbia Valley in the interests of American rivals to the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus stimulated, popular interest in the disputed territory steadily augmented, until a demand began to be heard from different parts of the country, and notably from Benton's State, for land grants in Oregon and disruption of the monopoly which the Hudson's Bay Company, a purely British organization, had enjoyed ever since its absorption of the Northwest Company, the purchaser of the single American trading post of Astoria. The debate on Floyd's bill, in 1829, revealed the fact that three distinct companies of would-be emigrants, one of which was from Massachusetts and was said to number three thousand souls, were petitioning Congress for land across the Rockies. Nothing came of these petitions, but nevertheless, influenced perhaps by the extravagant pictures of the eccentric Boston schoolmaster, Hall Kelley, who for some years had been lecturing on the riches of Oregon, an expedition started from New England in 1832 under the leadership of Nathaniel Wyeth, of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The real colonization of Oregon, however, the

movement which Floyd and Benton had so long hoped to see under way, began two years later with the arrival from the East of a small party of American missionaries to the Oregon Indians. Soon other missionaries followed, including the celebrated Marcus Whitman, about whom an interesting legend has been woven in connection with the "great migration" which presently brought upwards of a thousand American colonists into Oregon.\* Settling on the Willamette and Walla Walla Rivers, and establishing a branch on Lapwai Creek, not far from its junction with the Clearwater, these missionaries gradually attracted about their stations not merely

\* The story, still repeated by many writers, is to the effect that Whitman, while visiting a post of the Hudson's Bay Company, heard of a scheme to fill the Columbia Valley with colonists from Canada, and at once resolved to hasten to Washington, acquaint the authorities with the situation, and urge immediate colonization from the United States. Saddling a horse and starting out, despite the protests of his associates, he made the long journey eastward at imminent peril of his life, intent only on "saving Oregon" for his country. At Washington he met with a frigid reception from Secretary of State Webster and President Tyler, but secured from the latter a promise that if the feasibility of a wagon route across the Rockies could be demonstrated, he would do all in his power to promote colonization and keep the British from winning Oregon. With this promise in mind, the legend further has it, Whitman himself organized the "great migration," and guided it safely across the continent. Unfortunately for this romantic narrative, documentary evidence has been adduced by Professors Bourne and Marshall showing that the reason for Whitman's journey was to "save," not Oregon, but his mission station, which he had learned the Board of Missions purposed abolishing; and that he simply availed himself of "the great migration" as a means of securing an escort on the way back to the Columbia Valley.

the Indians they had come to convert, but little groups of settlers from the United States; and in this way, though at first so slowly that it is estimated there were at the end of 1841 not more than four hundred Americans in all Oregon, the American farmer began to dispute supremacy in the Columbia Valley with the British trapper and trader. Immigration, however, still hesitated, owing to the uncertainty as to territorial rights, and it was to end this uncertainty that Benton's colleague from Missouri, Lewis F. Linn, in February, 1838, brought in a bill for the occupation of the Columbia by troops from the United States, and the establishment of a Territory to be known as Oregon Territory.

Once more the question of title had been thrust upon the attention of an unwilling Government, and this time with an insistence that would not be denied. Benton, as staunch an expansionist as ever, hurried to Linn's assistance — if, indeed, he had not inspired his action — and, by securing reference of the bill to a select committee with Linn at its head, insured a favorable report on the measure. But it proved impossible to bring about a favorable vote, and again the contest dragged, the only immediate result of the Missourians' efforts, renewed in 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1842, being an access of popular

interest in Oregon and a slowly increasing drift Oregonward of settlers from the United States. To further this movement, Benton, now more determined than ever to force a territorial adjustment with Great Britain, hit upon the expedient of sending out his son-in-law, John C. Fremont, a young officer in the United States army, to explore the country west of Missouri and up to and beyond the Rockies.

Fremont's special business, as Benton explains in his invaluable "Thirty Years' View," was to locate the South Pass and fix the most direct route for emigration to the Columbia; it being believed that emigration would also be encouraged by the fact that Fremont's work had the sanction and support of the Government. His exploration was completed in the summer of 1842, and was an entire success. The next year witnessed the "great migration" of the thousand sturdy Americans who, starting out in a long caravan of "prairie schooners" from near the site of Kansas City, in Benton's own picturesque language, made "their long pilgrimage overland from the frontiers of Missouri, with their wives and children, their flocks and herds, their implements of husbandry and weapons of defense — traversing the vast inclined plane to the base of

the Rocky Mountains, crossing that barrier (deemed impassable by Europeans) and descending the wide slope which declines from the mountains to the Pacific."\* History was in truth repeating itself. The sons of pioneer fathers and grandfathers, who had themselves crossed a mountain barrier to find homes in a land where nature and the savage formerly reigned supreme, they in their turn were answering the call of the wilderness, the invitation of the setting sun. Not to separate from the Union, but to strike the roots of the Union more deeply and more widely into America, to bring up children who, in a free and open world, should labor in their generation for the Union — such, however indistinctly they were conscious of it, was the mission of those early voyagers of the prairie.

Meantime, important events were transpiring at Washington. Despatched thither by Great Britain to effect a settlement of the Maine boundary and other long-standing disputes, Lord Ashburton in June, 1842, began negotiations with Secretary Webster which it was confidently expected by many in the United States would end for all time the troublesome Oregon question. But when the Webster-Ashburton Treaty was finally framed and

\* Benton's "Thirty Years' View," vol. II, p. 469.

sent to the Senate for ratification, it was found that Oregon was not so much as mentioned, the sole allusion to it being contained in President Tyler's message accompanying the treaty. "After sundry informal communications with the British Minister upon the subject of the claims of the two countries to the west of the Rocky Mountains," explained Tyler, who evidently felt that some explanation was necessary, "so little probability was found to exist of coming to any agreement on that subject at present that it was not thought expedient to make it one of the subjects of formal negotiation to be entered upon between this Government and the British Minister as part of his duties under his special mission."\* Now, for the first time, popular feeling began to run really high, and on every side were heard expressions of disappointment and resentment, symptoms of a nascent animosity which was sedulously fanned by the wrathful Benton.

In one of his longest and ablest speeches on the Oregon question, delivered when the Webster-Ashburton Treaty came up for ratification, he exposed mercilessly the shortcomings of the diplomacy

\* James D. Richardson's "Messages and Papers of the Presidents," vol. IV, p. 166.

of the past in giving Great Britain an opportunity to set up a claim to the valley of the Columbia, presented clearly the superior grounds of the American claim, giving title, he pointed out, to all the region west of the Rockies between the forty-second and forty-ninth parallels; and denounced in unmeasured terms the silence obtaining in the treaty. "The President tells us," he sarcastically cried, "that there is 'no probability of coming to any agreement at present.' Then, when can the agreement be made? If refused now, when is it to come? Never, until we show that we prefer war to ignominious peace." "The fact is," he continued, waxing angrier with every word, "no agreement is ever intended. Contented with her possession, Great Britain wants delay that time may ripen possession into title, and fortunate events facilitate her designs. My colleague [Linn] and myself were sounded on this point. Our answers forbade the belief that we would compromise or sacrifice the rights and interests of our country; and this may have been the reason why there were no 'formal negotiations' in relation to it. Had we been 'soft enough,' there might have been an agreement to divide our country by the river, or to refer the whole title to the decision of a friendly sovereign. We were not soft enough

for that.”\* He would, therefore, urge all who heard him to vote against the ratification of the treaty.

In this plea he failed, and the treaty was duly ratified. But so thoroughly had he aroused the Senate that a demand arose for action on Linn's latest bill, which included a land grant of six hundred and forty acres to every white male emigrant to Oregon. Then began a stormy debate, with Benton and Linn meeting a powerful opposition headed by none other than John C. Calhoun, himself at that very moment moving earth and sky to achieve the annexation of Texas. Let matters stand as they are, urged Calhoun, and “silent immigration” will finally save Oregon for the United States without involving the nation in the possibilities of a war. Here, manifestly, was the baneful influence of sectionalism. Oregon would not benefit, nay, was likely to injure, the slavery system and the political power of the slaveholding States. Therefore it would not do to feel over-anxious about Oregon. But not even the eloquence of Calhoun could stem the tide. Passing the Senate, though by the narrowest of margins, Linn's bill was hurried to the House; where, however, to the joy of its enemies, it met an opposition too strong to be beaten down.

\* Benton's “Thirty Years' View,” vol. II, pp. 428-29.

Before Congress again assembled Linn had died, and Benton remained the sole survivor of the original champions of Oregon, with victory seemingly as remote as ever. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, the situation completely changed, in a way that at last presaged definite action. But it was not a change altogether to Benton's liking. He had preached unfalteringly the doctrine of war, if it were necessary to go to war to secure American rights beyond the Rockies. He had not preached what now began to be asserted with the greatest freedom—that American rights beyond the Rockies included the entire country from California to Russian America, and that the United States should give battle rather than relinquish any part of it. Nor was this assertion made only by reckless and excited individuals. It was even voiced by the head of the nation, the discredited Tyler, President without a party, and prepared to go to any length to obtain one. To curry favor with the Democrats of the South he had espoused the cause of Texas annexation; similarly, to obtain popularity among the Democrats of the North and West, he declared, in his annual Message to Congress, December, 1843, that "after a rigid and, as far as practicable, unbiased examination of the subject, the United States

have always contended that their rights appertain to the entire region of country lying on the Pacific and embraced within north latitude forty-two degrees and north latitude fifty-four degrees, forty minutes."

Caught up as a party cry, and with the "reoccupation" of the whole of Oregon inserted side by side with the annexation of Texas as a plank of the Democratic platform on which James K. Polk was nominated for the Presidency, the country during the campaign of 1844 rang with the defiant slogan of "Fifty-four forty or fight!"\* From Great Britain

\* The publication of this chapter in *The Outlook* drew from a Nebraska correspondent, signing himself C. G. P., the following interesting statement: "In 'The Romance of Expansion' I was much interested in the settlement of the question of the Northwestern Boundary, particularly so because I have a bit of unwritten history in connection with it. About the year 1840 a young man by the name of Enoch W. Eastman, fully equipped for the practice of law, came from Vermont to Burlington, Iowa, and put out his shingle. Until the beginning of the Civil War he was an old-line Democrat. He soon rose to prominence in politics. When Iowa applied for admission as a State, he was one of the commission sent to Washington with that business, and was himself instrumental in fixing the boundaries as they now stand. He was Lieutenant-Governor during the war, and after that was always called 'Governor Eastman.' After the war he again took up the practice of law in Eldora, where he spent the remainder of his life. During the Prohibition campaign in Iowa he was an active advocate of the amendment. I was living at the time in Whitten. He came there to speak, and I had the honor of entertaining him. In conversation he was telling me some things about the early history of Iowa. Something he said reminded me of it, and I asked him if he remembered the old Democratic watchword, 'Fifty-four forty or fight.' He raised his right hand, and with great force brought it down upon his knee, saying,

came back distinctly warlike echoes, increasing when Polk in his inaugural displayed every sign of intending to stand squarely on the platform that had elected him. Already, however, it was evident that the United States would be involved in one war as the result of the annexation of Texas; and neither Polk nor anybody save "fifty-four forty" extremists of the type of Cass, of Michigan, and Hannegan, of Indiana, was willing to see her engaged in another. A compromise, then, was assured — provided Great Britain would compromise. That was the rub. July, 1845, Buchanan, then Secretary of State, offered the old line of the forty-ninth parallel between the British and American possessions west of the Rockies, an offer which was rejected by the British Minister, Pakenham, in terms that were regarded as offensive.

To give Polk the credit that seems fairly his due,

'That was first written on that knee.' He was a delegate to a Democratic county convention. The convention was held in the open air. The committee on resolutions, not being accustomed to that sort of work, asked him to help them. He took a piece of wrapping paper, spread it on his knee, and, after writing some resolutions about local politics, added, 'In the matter of the Northwestern Boundary we are for Fifty-four forty or fight.' The State convention met a few days later and adopted the same resolution. It was then taken up by the Democratic press and speakers and spread like wildfire. The public did not know and could not guess who was the author. In the guesses many prominent Democrats were named, but most of them centered on Lewis Cass, of Michigan." In *The Outlook*, vol. XC, p. 87.

it was probably his action in withdrawing Buchanan's offer and reasserting, as he did in his first annual Message, December, 1845, his determination to stand out for the whole of Oregon, that brought Great Britain into a more pliant frame of mind. Polk, as subsequent events showed, was "bluffing" — to use a homely but expressive phrase — yet without his "bluff" the controversy would scarcely have been settled on the precise terms which the United States had from the first been willing to accept — and terms, it cannot be too thoroughly understood, which were absolutely just. Of late years the tendency among historical writers has been to decry the settlement as an act of almost criminal concession on the part of the Administration — whereas it is perhaps the most praiseworthy measure which the Polk government achieved. In any event, Polk's seeming inflexibility, supported by the action of Congress in authorizing him to give the necessary twelve months' notice terminating the joint occupation agreement, convinced Great Britain that concession on her part was imperative if she would avoid a war; and no more than the United States did she desire to engage in hostilities. Before the summer of 1846 arrived, she had made a complete surrender, yielding her claims in the valley of

the Columbia and accepting the forty-ninth parallel as the demarcation line between her far West possessions and those of the United States.

Still the situation was not free from danger. So strong was the "fifty-four forty" sentiment in the Senate that it was questionable whether a treaty constituting the forty-ninth parallel as the boundary line would be ratified; and non-ratification would not merely embarrass the Administration, but almost surely lead to increased complications with Great Britain. In his dilemma Polk turned to the one man who, he felt, could save the day for him and for Oregon — Benton, of Missouri. Already one of the most abused statesmen in the country by reason of the bravery and honesty with which he denied the right of the United States to any part of Oregon north of the forty-ninth parallel, Benton cheerfully accepted the added burden laid upon him. His counsel to Polk was to fall back upon an obsolete custom and request the Senate to give him, as President, its advice upon the terms of the treaty to be negotiated with Great Britain, submitting, for such advice, a draft of the treaty that had been already arranged. By this device the responsibility for receding from the "fifty-four forty" line would be shifted from the President to the Senate. Eagerly

Polk clutched at this straw. But, he nervously asked, would the Senate take the desired action, a two-thirds vote being requisite? Benton engaged that it would, and, to make good his pledge, saw personally every Senatorial member of the opposition party — the Whig party — and secured the promise of sufficient votes to carry the day over those Democrats who, like Cass and Hannegan, would have all of Oregon or none.

June 10, 1846, the "advice" was asked. It was an anxious moment for both Polk and Benton, facing a torrent of angry invective and denounced as traitors to their party and their country. For two days the storm raged, and then, the Whigs faithfully falling into line, by thirty-seven votes to twelve the President's wishes were met in a terse, businesslike resolution. Three days afterwards the treaty itself was signed by the Secretary of State and the British Minister, and in another two days the Senate ratified it by an increased vote on each side — forty-one in favor of, and fourteen opposed to, ratification. In such wise, nearly thirty years after he had uttered his first protest against the presence of the British in the pleasant lands about the Columbia River, did Thomas Hart Benton triumph in the cause he had so stoutly advocated.

## CHAPTER VI

### JOHN CHARLES FREMONT AND THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA

THE Mexican War, by which the United States gained her second Pacific coast acquisition and rounded out her contiguous possessions on the North American continent, has long been a subject of warm debate. The prevailing view is that it was a war of shameless aggression and spoliation, forced on Mexico in the interests of the slaveholders of the Southern States. Against this, and not wholly without reason, it is urged that the war was the outcome not of a sectional but of a national desire, and extenuating circumstances are found in the manifest eagerness of the Mexican people to engage in hostilities, the persistent refusal of the Mexican Government to pay damage claims duly awarded to the United States by international arbitration, and the summary treatment accorded the commissioner sent by President Polk to negotiate a peaceful settlement of these claims and of the difficulties growing out of the annexation of Texas. Both

views agree, however, in affirming that the prime object of the war was to compel a boundary readjustment which should give the United States possession of the whole of Texas, as anciently delimited, and of the fertile region of California, with its smiling plains and valleys, its lofty mountains, and its splendid frontage on the Pacific.

Possession of California had, indeed, been desired by the United States years before resort was had to war as a means of obtaining it. Attention was first directed to it by the efforts of Benton and Floyd and their coadjutors to make sure of Oregon, and shortly afterwards interest was increased by the reports of traders and trappers, who brought home impressive accounts of California's beauty and riches. Beginning with 1822, when a maritime trade was opened between Boston and Monterey, a steady, if long insignificant, stream of immigration from the United States trickled into the country. The passage of the Act of 1830, by which Mexico, for the special purpose of checking American immigration into Texas, forbade further foreign colonization of her border provinces, had no effect in retarding the inflow into California. The local authorities, always jealous of the central Government and enjoying exceptional freedom of action

by reason of their remoteness from the capital, welcomed immigrants as cordially as before and bestowed on them generous privileges and extensive land grants.

Thus, had it not been that, as in the case of Oregon, the American people felt no immediate need of crossing the Rocky Mountains, there would have set in a movement which, given the continuance of a weak and divided native population, would probably have resulted in the speedy Americanization of California and its absorption into the United States in much the same way as Texas. As it was, immigration lagged to such an extent that in 1836, or about the time President Jackson made an effort to acquire by purchase at least a part of California, the American population aggregated rather less than three hundred; and ten years later, at the beginning of the conquest, it was still scarcely four hundred out of a total population of between eight and nine thousand.\* Of the Americans, the majority were located in Monterey, then the great center of trade, and on ranches in the Sacramento Valley, particularly in the neighborhood of New Helvetia, or Sutter's Fort, as it was known from the name of its owner,

\* These estimates are based on figures found in the California volumes of Bancroft's "History of the Pacific States of North America," and in Josiah Royce's "California."

John A. Sutter, the wealthiest ranchero in the valley and an American by adoption although a Swiss by birth. On the whole, the relations between the foreigners and the natives remained friendly, despite some occasional friction. The Californians themselves, it should be noted, were frequently on the verge of civil war, owing to the constant intrigues of their military commander, General José Castro, to undermine the authority of the civil governor, Pio Pico.

Such was the situation when President Polk made up his mind that the acquisition of California was not merely desirable but absolutely necessary to the United States. In reaching this decision he was no doubt influenced to a considerable extent by the wishes of his fellow-Southerners, who had been disappointed by the admission of Texas as a single State instead of several States, and felt that, if the system they upheld was to endure, a way must be found to obtain additional territory open to slavery. But there also is reason to believe that Polk looked at the subject from a national as well as a sectional point of view, and was sincerely persuaded that unless the United States took possession of California it would, in its weak and defenseless condition, inevitably pass from the ownership of Mexico to that

of some foreign Power. It will be remembered that one of the most potent factors in bringing about the annexation of Texas was the fear of the baneful influence that might be exercised by Great Britain or France if Texas remained an independent republic, rumor crediting the Governments of those countries with sinister designs against the welfare of the United States. Similarly, it was reported that both Great Britain and France were only awaiting a favorable opportunity to wrest California from Mexico; and such was the excitement created by this report that in 1842, during Tyler's administration, under the belief that war had then broken out between Mexico and the United States, and anxious to forestall action by any other power, Commodore Thomas Ap Catesby Jones, of the American navy, sailed to Monterey with a squadron, seized the port, and raised the American flag; which was, however, lowered on the discovery that peace still prevailed.

Just what foundation there was for the dread of foreign intervention in California cannot be stated until closer research shall have been made among the archives of the countries chiefly concerned. Certainly the activity of foreign diplomats and the maneuvers of foreign fleets tended to give color to the apprehensions entertained by Polk and by

Americans of all sections. Bearing this in mind, and remembering likewise the expansionistic tendencies of the time and the anxiety of the leaders of the slaveholding States to strengthen their position against the increasing power of the non-slaveholding North, it is easy to understand the resolution taken by the President and his advisers to insist on the cession of California as part of the price to be paid by Mexico if she would avoid a war.

To this end, and in the hope that Mexico might yield peaceably what otherwise was to be taken from her by force, Polk despatched John Slidell, of New Orleans, to the Mexican capital, several months after Mexico had severed diplomatic relations with the United States in consequence of the annexation of Texas. Slidell went as a minister plenipotentiary, empowered to negotiate concerning all difficulties between the two Governments, and instructed to exert his best endeavors in conciliating the Mexicans. His instructions further directed him, however, to press for a settlement on a territorial basis, securing a new boundary line between Mexico and the United States, which should give the latter New Mexico and California in addition to Texas. For New Mexico Slidell was authorized to offer five million dollars and the assumption by the United States Govern-

ment of the unpaid damage claims; for California he was authorized to offer far more — twenty-five million dollars if the line should be drawn so as to give the United States all of the province north of and including Monterey, and twenty million dollars should it include only San Francisco and the country north of San Francisco.

What answer the Mexican Government would have returned to these demands is impossible to say. For, emboldened by the popular clamor for war, it peremptorily refused to receive Slidell. Nor did he profit by lingering until, with almost incredible fatuity, the Mexicans so far forgot their common danger as to indulge in a revolution and establish a new Government. Like its predecessor, it would have nothing to do with Slidell. His departure, in March, 1846, marked the end of negotiations. In April Mexican troops were deliberately provoked into striking the first blow, and in May war was formally declared by the United States Congress. Before the end of summer General Stephen W. Kearny had made himself master of New Mexico and was hurriedly marching to conquer California. But long ere Kearny's arrival that province had been practically won for the United States, by means so audacious and so romantic as to fasten the atten-

tion of the entire nation on the leading actor in the conquest, John Charles Fremont, a man previously unheard of as a soldier but well known as a daring and successful explorer.

Even before his California exploits Fremont's career had, in fact, been meteoric and spectacular. It was, too, essentially of his own making. Born at Savannah in 1813, the son of a French refugee who had married into one of the best families of Virginia, he started in life as a schoolmaster. But soon, as the result perhaps of tendencies inherited from his father, who was of a venturesome and roving disposition, he abandoned teaching in favor of surveying. Such was the ability he showed that, when barely turned twenty, he was employed by the Federal Government to make a railway survey among the mountains of the Carolinas and Tennessee. This work completed, he was immediately appointed to assist the French explorer Nicollet, who had planned an expedition to the headwaters of the Mississippi, in the interests of geographical science; and about the same time, on the recommendation of Joel R. Poinsett, then Secretary of War, President Van Buren commissioned him to a lieutenancy in the corps of topographical engineers.

The Nicollet expedition kept Fremont busily en-

gaged through the years 1838 and 1839. In the following year he made the acquaintance of Thomas Hart Benton, who, attracted by his pleasing personality and by his evident enthusiasm over the prospects of the new West, formed a strong liking for the young man. A frequent visitor to Benton's house, he there met and became deeply enamored of Benton's daughter Jessie, still in her teens, beautiful, imaginative, proud, and ambitious. She, for her part, found in Fremont the ideal of her dreams. Parental opposition, on the score of the young officer's poverty and scant prospect of advancement, only strengthened their love, and after a stormy courtship they were married in 1841. For a time Benton raged. Then he surrendered at discretion. And presently Fremont was in the wilderness once more, engaged in the important task of fixing a direct route for immigration to Oregon. It was a project dear to Benton's heart, and a splendid opportunity for Benton's son-in-law. So well did he utilize it that, after a summer of hardships and achievements, the most noteworthy of which was the hazardous planting of the Stars and Stripes on a sky-challenging Rocky Mountain summit, he was hailed as among the greatest of modern explorers.

This was in 1842. The next year he was again



JOHN CHARLES FREMONT



at the head of an exploring expedition, under orders to cross the Rockies and penetrate through Oregon to the shores of the Pacific. Outward bound all went well, but on his way home, deceived by erroneous reports as to the feasibility of the route he had selected, he and his exhausted followers were driven far to the south by snow and storm and impassable mountains. Unable to secure a guide, they wandered for months over the heights and through the depths of the Sierra Nevada, finally reaching the Sacramento Valley after terrific sufferings and when hope was all but gone. Here they were hospitably received by the generous Sutter, and here Fremont obtained his first glimpse of the glories of California. Now, doubtless, if not before, he began to dream of finding a route by which to connect this western paradise with the far-away frontier settlements of his own country; and such was actually one of the principal objects of his next expedition, begun in the autumn of 1845, but cut short by the stirring events of the conquest.

As has been said, the relations between the Californians and the American settlers in California were at that time friendly. But there was, nevertheless, a well-grounded fear among the authorities that, in the event of war between the United States

and Mexico, California would be the first point of attack, and consequently, so far as their resources and mutual jealousies would permit, they were on the alert to guard against a surprise. The unexpected appearance of Fremont and his men at Sutter's Fort, after their harrowing experiences in the Sierras, had created no small astonishment and some alarm; and when it was rumored that he was back in California with a still larger following, there was much speculation as to the purpose of his coming. Fremont himself, though with only a small escort, hastened to Monterey to explain to General Castro that his expedition was purely scientific in character, and to request permission to enter and explore in California; after which he brought the remainder of his party, numbering in all sixty-two backwoodsmen, plainsmen, voyageurs, and Indians, across the mountains and down to the sea, where he went into camp near Monterey. It soon became evident that he had no immediate intention of renewing his journey, and Castro, in a panic, despatched an officer to inform him that, in compliance with the Mexican law against the admission of foreigners, he must withdraw from the province.

It was now that Fremont gave a signal display of the combined daring and rashness that was to carry

him triumphantly through California before the year was out. Instead of obeying Castro's order, or at most remonstrating in diplomatic language, he returned a defiant reply and proceeded to erect fortifications on the summit of Gavilan Peak, on which he also raised the American flag. All Monterey and the region round about was at once thrown into the wildest excitement. Blustering vehemently, and calling upon the citizens to unite with him in defense of their country, Castro quickly organized an army to expel the bold intruders. But beyond marching and countermarching in full view of the garrison on Gavilan Peak he dared not go. To storm the rude fort meant the ascent of a precipitous height guarded by sixty-two well-armed sharpshooters, and Castro, unused to warfare save by proclamation, had no fancy to make the attempt. Fortunately for the valiant Californian, Fremont in a few days realized the utter illegality of his position, and, evacuating his defenses, beat a leisurely retreat, with the intention of resuming his Oregon explorations. But, on the very border of Oregon, he was overtaken by a United States army officer, Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie, the bearer of important letters from Senator Benton, and of a still more important secret despatch from Secretary of State

Buchanan, containing information and instructions which started Fremont and his men southward again, fast as they could march.

The exact nature of the instructions thus delivered in the heart of the picturesque California wilderness has been debated almost as vigorously as the Mexican War itself. Fremont's own account, long accepted without question, asserts that he was distinctly authorized to take whatever measures he might deem proper to secure California for the United States. But the researches of recent historians of the conquest, notably Hubert Howe Bancroft and his collaborators, indicate that he was simply directed to keep an eye on the progress of events, and co-operate with United States Consul Larkin, of Monterey, to whom also Gillespie had brought a secret despatch appointing him to serve as a confidential agent of the United States in promoting annexationistic sentiments among the native population. Proceeding on this view of the case, it is argued that Fremont acted in deliberate disobedience of his orders, that the course he pursued hindered rather than helped the conquest, and that on him must be placed the responsibility for the subsequent animosity between the victors and the vanquished. That he disobeyed orders seems borne out by the

facts brought to light of late years; but, at all events in the opinion of the present writer, the other accusations are unwarranted.

It must be remembered that besides appointing confidential agents with instructions to confine their efforts to the cultivation of a friendly understanding with the Californians, the United States Government directed Commodore Sloat to take possession of the ports of the province at the first news of war with Mexico, and further ordered General Kearny to march an army overland for active co-operation with Sloat. Now, although it is true that a native faction was quite willing to see California peacefully absorbed by the United States, it is ridiculous to suppose that the secret agents could have so managed affairs that the population as a whole would feel not so much as resentment at the forcible seizure of their country. Some degree of patriotism must be conceded even to the despised Californian. And albeit Fremont began the fighting, he was likewise the first to attempt, by kindness, moderation, and generosity, to heal the wounds inevitable in every conquest; and had it not been for later events completely beyond his control, might well have won additional fame as a pacificator. As to the charge that he hindered rather than helped the conquest, it

need only be said, as we are now about to learn, that it was his boldness of action, if disobedience of orders, which nerved the vacillating Sloat to play the rôle assigned to him by the authorities at Washington. Viewed in the sober light of historical investigation, Fremont undoubtedly presents a less heroic appearance than that with which tradition has invested him. But he still remains the most impressive and the most attractive figure connected with the conquest.

His meeting with Gillespie took place on the evening of May 9, 1846. Within little more than a fortnight he was back in the Sacramento Valley, where he found the American settlers greatly disturbed by reports that Castro was mustering an army to expel them from California. Fremont's return only increased the excitement, it being felt that he must have learned that the lives of his countrymen were in danger. As a matter of fact, while Castro was probably incensed and suspicious, as a result not merely of Fremont's defiance but also of the rumored plans of the United States Government to take forcible possession of California, the evidence indicates that he did not contemplate any move against the Sacramento Valley Americans. Such, none the less, was the common belief, fortified, too,

by the posting of a forged proclamation purporting to come from him and ordering all foreigners to leave the country. Taking counsel of their fears, the rancheros consulted with Fremont, who promised to protect them if attacked, and advised them to forestall aggression by assuming the offensive on their own account. Thus assured of armed support, a band of settlers sallied forth one afternoon from the explorer's camp, and at sunrise of June 10 surprised a company of Californians in charge of a number of horses intended for Castro's troops. Seizing the horses, but letting their escort depart unharmed, the settlers hurriedly returned to advise with Fremont as to their next step.

Events now moved rapidly. It seemed certain that, whatever his earlier purposes, Castro would take the field against the budding revolutionists, and self-defense required action which would render it difficult for him to secure a foothold north of San Francisco Bay. Accordingly, while Fremont and his followers — many of whom begged permission to join openly in the movement — remained in camp, a tiny but stout-hearted army of thirty-three settlers crossed the Sacramento and by forced marches reached the town of Sonoma just before dawn of June 14. No garrison was in the place, the inhabi-

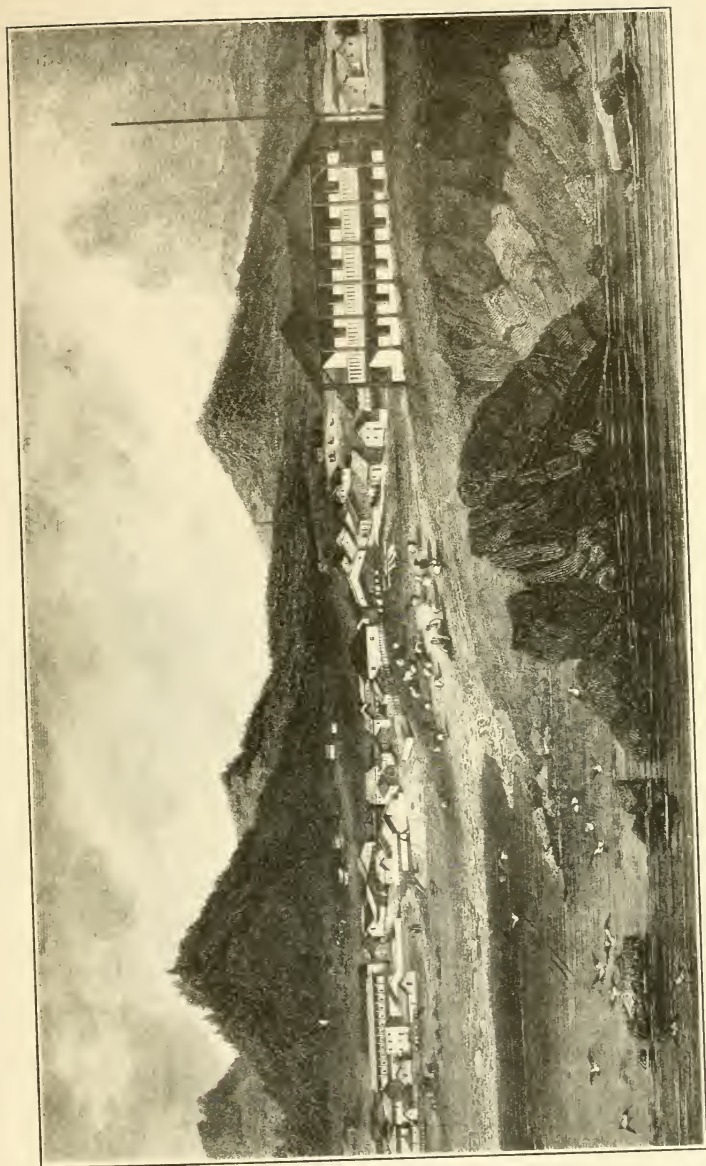
tants were asleep, and it fell without a shot. Making prisoners of the military commandant and two other officers, and locking the citizens in their houses, the Americans promptly proceeded to take possession, hauling down the Mexican flag and substituting in its stead an improvised standard bearing a crude representation of a grizzly bear. On the whole, order was well maintained. There was considerable drinking, and some private property was taken. But there was nothing like systematic looting, and the Californians were in no way molested, being soon released and permitted to follow their ordinary occupations.

The ease with which success was gained and the braggart language used by some of the leaders have led certain historians to belittle the "Bear Flag" revolt, as it is known, and to refer in contemptuous terms to those who participated in it. Yet it was in reality a singularly bold and venturesome enterprise, carried through with a dash and a vim that compel admiration notwithstanding the feebleness of the opposition actually encountered. That the opposition was feeble was due not to the cowardice of the Californians as a race — at San Pascual they showed well enough that they would fight — but to the incapacity, and worse, of their commanders, and

in especial of their Commander-in-Chief, General Castro. At the first news of the rising, Castro had fallen into a fine frenzy and had declared his intention of subduing the revolutionists with a ruthless hand. But, in place of immediately marching against them, he lingered for some days to observe the time-honored custom of issuing martial and patriotic proclamations. And when he laid aside the pen in favor of the sword, he led his forces not northward to Sonoma but southward to San Juan, whence he sent frantic appeals to Governor Pico to forget past animosities and join with him in crushing the army of thirty-three — now, to be sure, somewhat augmented by reinforcements from outlying ranches of the Sacramento. His one really warlike move was to send a detachment across San Francisco Bay under the command of a Colonel Torre, who, June 23, came into contact with a force of revolutionists and after a single exchange of volleys retreated with a loss of two men killed and several wounded. Two days later Fremont, aroused by the news of Torre's coming, was at Sonoma with his plainsmen, and henceforth was openly in charge of the revolution; winning no immediate renown, however, other than that arising from his capture of an abandoned fort on the site of the present San Francisco, and from an

unsuccessful pursuit of Torre, who made good his escape to the southern side of the bay.

Meantime Commodore Sloat, cruising off the coast with his squadron, was painfully pondering the problem whether or not to obey orders and seize the California ports. News of the first collision between American and Mexican troops had reached him as early as May 17, but, despite the urgings of his subordinate officers, he could not, such was his extreme caution, bring himself to adopt the course mapped out at Washington. Finally, July 2, he sailed into Monterey Harbor, followed shortly afterwards by a British fleet under the command of Admiral Sir George F. Seymour, who had been watching his movements, not, probably, with a view to checkmate him in California, but to be ready for instant action in case the Oregon controversy should result in war between the United States and Great Britain. At Monterey Sloat heard for the first time of Fremont's operations in the north, and not unnaturally leaped to the conclusion that the explorer was acting under specific orders. Thus encouraged, though still somewhat fearful for the consequences, he seized Monterey July 7, without meeting any opposition — Castro fleeing further south so soon as the tidings were brought him — and sent word to



MONTEREY IN ITS EARLY DAYS  
From an old print.



Fremont to join him immediately. Fremont by that time had left Sonoma — where the Bear flag now gave place to the Stars and Stripes — and was back at his camp in the Sacramento Valley. But he lost not a moment in starting for Monterey with his command and a number of the whilom revolutionists. The impression the party made as they swept into the quiet streets of the quaint old California seaport has been well described in a passage which deserves quotation for the vivid view it affords of the men who were the backbone of the conquest. It is taken from Frederick Walpole's "Four Years in the Pacific," a work by a British naval officer who was with Seymour at Monterey.

"A vast cloud of dust appeared first," writes Walpole, "and thence in long file emerged this wildest wild party. Fremont rode ahead — a spare, active-looking man, with such an eye! He was dressed in a blouse and leggings, and wore a felt hat. After him came five Delaware Indians, who were his body-guard, and have been with him through all his wanderings; they had charge of the baggage horses. The rest, many of them blacker than the Indians, rode two and two, the rifle held by one hand across the pommel of the saddle. Thirty-nine of them are his regular men, the rest are loafers picked up lately;

his original men are principally backwoodsmen from the State of Tennessee and the banks of the upper waters of the Missouri. . . . The dress of these men was principally a long, loose coat of deerskin, tied with thongs in front; trousers of the same, of their own manufacture, which, when wet through, they take off, scrape well inside with a knife, and put on as soon as dry; the saddles were of various fashions, though these and a large drove of horses, and a brass field-gun, were things they had picked up about California. They are allowed no liquor, tea and sugar only; this, no doubt, has much to do with their good conduct; and the discipline, too, is very strict."

Good fighting material, this, and commanded by a man who well knew its worth and was eager to utilize it. But to Fremont's request that Sloat enlist his "Bear Flag Battalion" as part of the United States forces for the completion of the conquest, the Commodore returned a wrathful refusal. He had learned by now that Fremont's earlier actions had been based only on blanket instructions, were, it might be, contrary to instructions, and he bitterly reproached the explorer with having led him into an embarrassing situation. So great, in fact, was his confusion and anxiety that he sailed for

home to explain matters, turning the squadron over to Commodore R. F. Stockton, who had chanced to arrive from Hawaii about the time Fremont made his dramatic entrance into Monterey. And in Stockton Fremont found both a friend and an ally who shared his views as to the necessity for energetic action. Constituting the "Bears" a volunteer battalion in the United States army, with Fremont at its head as major, and Gillespie assisting him as captain, Stockton decided on a campaign which had as chief objective the capture of the California capital, Los Angeles, where General Castro and Governor Pico had at last united forces.

Sailing from Monterey July 26, Fremont and his men three days later reached San Diego, in the extreme south of California, raised the American flag, and, after leaving a garrison in the town, started to march north to Los Angeles, where they were to meet Stockton and join in a combined assault. Stockton, meanwhile, took a force of three hundred and sixty marines and sailors from Monterey to Santa Barbara, where the flag-raising formality was duly observed, and from Santa Barbara proceeded to San Pedro, a coastal town just south of Los Angeles. From San Pedro, after a few days spent

in drilling the seamen in the rudiments of land warfare, the advance to the capital was begun.

Castro, unready as ever, let it be known at this juncture that he would like to negotiate with the invaders. To his dismay he found them in no mood for negotiation. For at least this once, therefore, he reached a quick decision, sending to Governor Pico a long despatch in which he explained that he was about to disband his army and go to Mexico in order to report the situation to the central authorities. He should, he added, be pleased to have the Governor as a traveling companion on the long journey, an invitation which fell in so well with Pico's own desires that the unworthy pair were soon in full flight across the border. The California Legislative Assembly, then in session, likewise adjourned sine die, the members seeking safety by a hasty retreat. Without leaders and without troops, the people of Los Angeles had no alternative but to submit.

August 13, at five o'clock in the afternoon, Fremont's and Stockton's combined forces entered the city with flags flying and drums beating. As always, they maintained excellent discipline, and this, together with the encouraging strains of a brass band which gave a concert in the evening, reassured the

citizens to a considerable extent. Some progress, though more apparent than real, in re-establishing friendly relations was also effected by a tour of conciliation which Fremont made through the surrounding country. By the practice of making prisoners and then releasing them on parole, it was hoped to secure further sureties for future peace; but it soon became evident that the installation of a garrison would be necessary, and for this work Stockton detailed Gillespie and fifty men. About the same time he appointed Fremont military commandant of all California, and then, September 5, sailed for Monterey with the greater part of the troops. Three days afterwards Fremont followed him to establish headquarters in the genial valley of the Sacramento.

The conquest now seemed complete. But there were patriots among the Californians, and, freed from the deadening influence of Castro and Pico, a few bold souls began to concert measures to win back the province. Chief among these was a paroled officer named Flores, who, regardless of the fact that he had given his word not to take up arms against the United States, before long had a following sufficiently strong to enable him to lay a successful siege to Los Angeles and expel Gillespie, who was forced

to capitulate and retire to Monterey. A little later the Californians reoccupied Santa Barbara and San Diego, and, October 4, defeated a force which Stockton had sent against them. Then began a guerrilla warfare, as difficult for the Americans to repress as it was unprofitable for the Californians to pursue.

Fremont, at the first intimation of the attack on Gillespie, had hastened to Monterey — where, by the way, he found awaiting him a commission as lieutenant-colonel in the United States army — and thence to Santa Barbara by water, intending to procure horses and gallop to Gillespie's relief. But no horses were to be had, and reluctantly he was compelled to return to Monterey, at which place the defeated Gillespie had in the meantime arrived. With the greatest energy Fremont now began to raise an army, and early in November was at the head of a motley — but, for the work in hand, exceedingly effective — force of five hundred plainsmen, settlers, recently arrived immigrants, and native Indians. With these he took the field, ridding North California of the enemy, and starting south to join Stockton, who was operating about the capital.

It was during this march that an incident occurred of which his biographers have deservedly made

much. Jesus Pico, a brother of the fugitive governor, had joined the insurrectionists in violation of his parole, and on being captured was tried by a court martial and sentenced to death. This sentence Fremont approved; but, an hour before the time set for the execution, moved by the prayers and lamentations of Pico's wife and children, he granted the condemned a full pardon. Pico (if we are at liberty to accept the traditional account) "flung himself with unrestrained emotion, before Colonel Fremont, clasped his knees, swore eternal fidelity, and begged the privilege of fighting and dying for him." \* This may be putting the case over-strongly; but there is no doubt that henceforth Pico and Pico's friends were sincerely attached to Fremont, and that by many other, if less sensational, acts of clemency and kindness Fremont did much to gain for his countrymen the confidence and good-will of the beaten Californians.

As yet, however, the Californians had still to acknowledge defeat, and Fremont's efforts were chiefly directed to their subjugation. But so elusive were they that he could never close with them in anything like a regular engagement. That fortune was

\* C. W. Upham's "The Life, Explorations, and Public Services of John Charles Fremont," p. 248.

reserved for another American commander, with results by no means redounding to the prestige of American arms. General Stephen W. Kearny, the reader will recall, had occupied New Mexico in August, and had set out on the long overland journey to California with the intention of similarly occupying that province, the conquest of which by Stockton and Fremont was quite unknown to him. Early in October he met a messenger\* hurrying from California to Washington with a report of the conquest, and on being told that the Californians had submitted without the slightest resistance, and were a race of cowards, he sent most of his force back to Santa Fé, continuing his journey with only one hundred dragoons. Nothing untoward occurred until the long and dreary march was almost at its end, when Kearny found his progress blocked by a numerous, active, and most troublesome foe.

While debating the best course to pursue, he was joined by Gillespie and forty men, sent by Stockton to reinforce him; and it was then decided to attack the Californians, who had taken up a strong position in the mountain village of San Pascual. Badly planned, and fought by travel-exhausted men, it

\* The messenger was no other than the celebrated Western guide and scout, Kit Carson, who had been associated with Fremont in all of his explorations, and to whom in no small measure their success was due.

would be charitable to Kearny to describe the resultant engagement as a drawn battle. He lost seventeen killed and eighteen wounded, the enemy withdrew and continued to harass him, and he was soon in a most dangerous situation, from which he was extricated only by the timely arrival of another body of troops from Stockton. Thus reinforced, he pushed painfully on, uniting with Stockton at San Diego late in December, and before the end of the month advancing with him against Los Angeles, which was still in the hands of the Californians.

All this time Fremont and his five hundred volunteers were approaching the same city from the north, encountering no opposition, but suffering terribly from cold and storms. Christmas Day they crossed the Santa Inez mountains in a blizzard, reaching Santa Barbara a couple of days afterwards, and early in the new year resuming their march to Los Angeles. But before they arrived there they were met by two Californians who told them that Stockton and Kearny, after a skirmish on the banks of the San Gabriel River, had entered the capital in triumph; and the next day two of the insurgent leaders came into Fremont's camp to treat for peace. Terms of capitulation were speedily arranged, Fremont, with a generosity as politic as it was conspicuous,

overlooking the broken paroles and extending a general amnesty. This marked the end of the war, and the definite establishment of American authority in California. With its unpleasant sequel, the quarrel between Kearny and Stockton over the question of whom should exercise supreme authority, and the court-martialing of Fremont on charges of disobedience preferred by Kearny, we need not concern ourselves.

But it is important, in closing, to make clear the territorial consequences of the conquest and of the success of American arms in Mexico. There, owing to the desperate valor of the Mexicans, the struggle lasted until the fall of 1847, and it was not until February, 1848, that a treaty of peace was actually signed. By its provisions the United States gained all that Polk had determined upon, and Mexico only a fraction of the pecuniary compensation previously offered — fifteen million dollars, and the assumption by the United States of the unpaid claims, in exchange for the vast area out of which have since been created the States of California, Nevada, and Utah, and parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Five years later, however, another ten millions were paid for a further readjustment of the boundary, adding a scant forty-five

thousand square miles to the territory of the United States in southern Arizona. The Gadsden Purchase, as this is known, marked the last step in the American advance, so far as related to territory adjacent to the Republic.

## CHAPTER VII

### WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD AND THE ALASKA CESSION

IN studying the territorial growth of the United States, it may not be amiss to remind the reader, the most conspicuous fact hitherto encountered has been the inevitability of the different acquisitions. The first migratory movement — the movement across the Alleghanies, following necessarily from economic stress and the genesis of a bold, enterprising, and restless people — was certain soon or late to give rise to a struggle for mastery of the Mississippi, the great mid-continent waterway. In good season a peaceful solution for the problem thus created was found in the Louisiana Purchase, transferring from the French to the American nation not only the Mississippi but also the enormous area to the westward watered by the Mississippi and its affluents. Then, and equally of necessity, was presented the question of acquiring the one piece of territory to the east of the Mississippi still held by alien hands, and constituting a serious menace to the welfare of the United States. This, again, was happily settled

by the Florida Purchase, though only after the use of intimidative methods, amply justified, however, by the principle of self-defense and self-preservation.

Texas came next, an acquisition not in itself necessarily inevitable, but rendered so by the stupendous folly of the Mexican authorities in permitting the colonization of that outlying and practically unoccupied province by the representatives of an adjacent nation stronger than theirs and differing from theirs in race, institutions, and points of view. When the inevitable conflict arose, the national instinct for expansion was, as has been shown, powerfully reinforced by a sectional desire, and Texas, though not without a severe struggle, became a part of the American Republic. Meantime, and likewise under the secondary stimulus of sectional interests, agitation had begun looking to anticipation of the inevitable by carrying the westward movement still further forward — across the Rocky Mountains and down to the shores of the Pacific. As yet the nation had not fully entered into its own, and vast expanses of internal territory were still to be occupied before a second transmontane migration would become necessary; but there were certain impatient souls who, rightly enough, urged that action should not wait on necessity. The outcome

of their urging was, on the one hand, the occupation of Oregon, to which the United States was rightfully entitled, and, on the other, the seizure of California, to which she had no title at all, but which in the course of time, given a continuance of the conditions then existing in that remote section of Mexico, would almost certainly have accrued to her by force of "silent immigration." In any event, the acquisition of California speedily became an established fact, and with it the "manifest destiny" of the American people to pass from sea to sea, and to assume headship in the western hemisphere, found fulfilment.

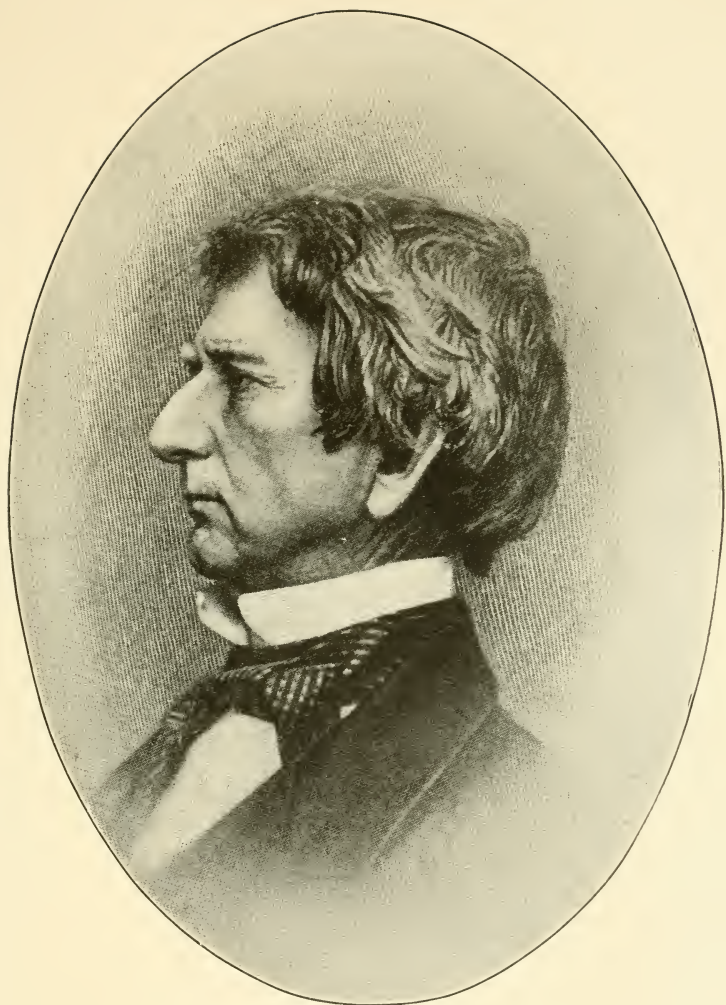
Nor, with the instinct for expansion thus strengthened and quickened by the unparalleled success and rapidity of the transcontinental movement, was it reasonable to expect that no further effort would be made to extend the dominions of the United States. On the contrary, everything pointed to such additional effort; with this difference, that while it had hitherto been comparatively easy to map out in advance the successive steps taken, it was impossible longer to predict in just what quarter future acquisitions would be found. That, clearly, would depend altogether upon new needs and wisely grasped opportunities, the element of inevitability

remaining only so far as concerned the certainty that the nation would not rest content with what had already been obtained. There were, of course, those who essayed the prophet's role, variously indicating Mexico, the West Indies, Canada, and even mid-Pacific and trans-Pacific territories as the next to be absorbed in the growth of the United States. But few were prepared for what actually occurred — the acquisition by purchase of the region in the extreme northwest known as Russian America. Remote, difficult of access, and generally believed to be worthless and uninhabitable, this was regarded by most Americans of the time as the least desirable of all possible territorial additions. Yet, thanks to the foresight, energy, and enthusiasm of a true statesman, William Henry Seward, it was the first to follow the Mexican Cession and the Gadsden Purchase.

Seward, for his part, occupies a unique place in the story of American expansion. The acquisition of Russian America is more directly attributable to him than is any other acquisition to the moving spirit most closely associated with it. And, unlike the others in our gallery, he was not born and brought up in an atmosphere peculiarly favorable to the development of expansionistic sentiments, but was,

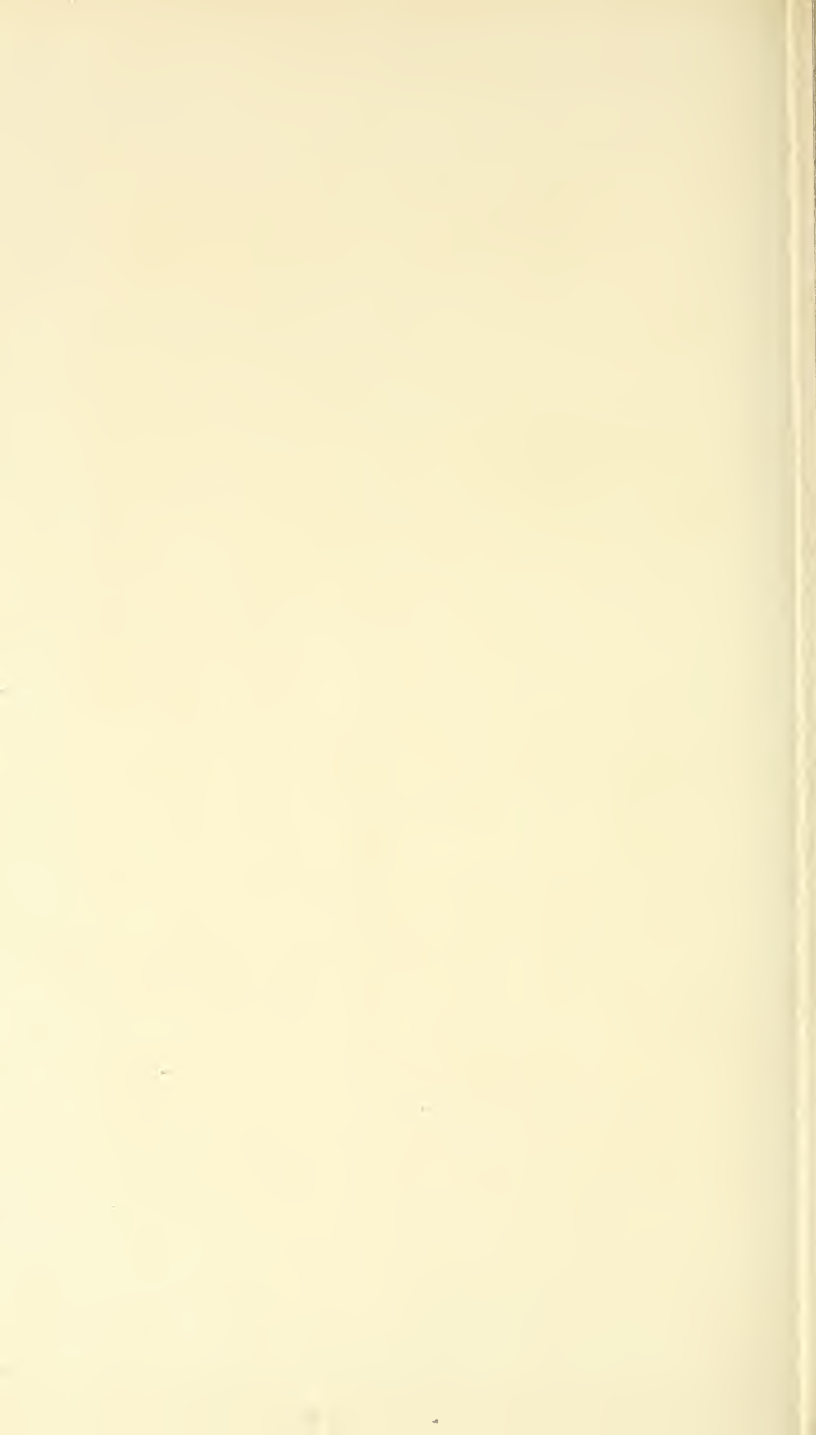
on the contrary, distinctly a self-made expansionist. His early years were spent on a farm in New York State, where he enjoyed few educational or other broadening advantages; and thereafter, until well past the age of forty, his interests were essentially State interests, although the eminence he rapidly attained in the councils of the Whig party, which he joined on its formation in 1832, inevitably widened his outlook. When, however, he began seriously to consider the future of the United States as a territorial as well as a political entity, the heritage of a naturally exuberant imagination, together with the influence of the teachings of his first political idol, John Quincy Adams, made itself felt and he promptly ranged himself among the adherents of the Jefferson-Adams-Jackson-Benton school of aggrandizement. On only one important point did he differ from them — stoutly opposing territorial growth by the aid of military conquest. “I want no enlargement of territory,” he once wrote, “sooner than it would come if we were content with a masterly inactivity. I abhor war, as I detest slavery. I would not give one human life for all the continent that remains to be annexed.”\*

\* George E. Baker's edition of “The Works of William H. Seward,” vol. III, p. 409.



WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD

From a photograph loaned by his son, Frederick W. Seward.



With this reservation, not one among the many apostles of the doctrine of "manifest destiny," whose voices were so loudly raised in the years immediately preceding the acquisition of Texas, Oregon, and California, surpassed Seward in preaching territorial expansion. With Jefferson, he "viewed the Confederacy as the nest from which all America, North and South, is to be peopled." With Benton, he beheld the American people continuing their westward movement until they had fairly established themselves on the Asiatic shores of the Pacific. At one time, in imagination, he located the "ultimate capital," of the United States in the "valley of Mexico," where "the glories of the Aztec capital would be renewed." And even when he "corrected this view," possibly from a growing distrust of the advantages to be gained from absorption of the restless and unruly Latin-American republics, Seward still placed the "future and ultimate central seat of power" in such a quarter — "at the head of navigation on the Mississippi River and on the great Mediterranean lakes" — as to indicate his belief that the Stars and Stripes would one day wave over the entire continent from the frozen Arctic to the tropical Caribbean.\*

\* Baker's Edition, vol. IV, pp. 331-32.

Nor did he exhaust his expansionistic sentiments in flamboyant generalities and high-sounding predictions. To the best of his ability, and perhaps more earnestly than any other builder of the prospective American Empire, he toiled to make his dreams come true. When he was first in a position to turn his energies in this direction — with his election to the United States Senate in 1849 — the growing contest over slavery claimed and held his attention, to continue uppermost in his heart and mind until Appomattox brought it to its dramatic close. Then, as Secretary of State under President Johnson, he hastened to promote his darling project of creating a greater America than even that which had been born of the irresistible sweep to the Pacific. All over the world he cast his eye, seeking here and seeking there for territory which the United States might advantageously possess.

He had all the fire, one might almost say the recklessness, of the true enthusiast. Besides Russian America, the concrete additions which he endeavored to make included Hawaii, Cuba, Hayti, San Domingo, and the Danish West Indian Islands of St. John and St. Thomas. It was even reported that he had it in mind to annex a part of China; and that this rumor did not altogether do him injustice is evi-

dent from a letter he wrote to Cassius M. Clay. "Russia and the United States," he warned Clay, "may remain good friends until, each having made a circuit of half the globe in opposite directions, they shall meet and greet each other in regions where civilization first began, and where, after so many ages, it has become now lethargic and helpless."\* With respect to the Danish islands he actually succeeded in negotiating a treaty of cession, but this failed of ratification in the United States Senate, chiefly owing to Congressional animosity to the Johnson administration. The same influence played a part in paralyzing his other efforts, and to such an extent that, for all his ambition and high hopes, when he stepped out of office he could boast of but one territorial achievement — and that an achievement held in scorn and derision by the vast majority of his fellow-countrymen. To-day, time having proved that Seward was right and the nation wrong, it stands as an enduring monument to his fame.

He did not, however, originate the idea of acquiring Alaska. That was broached as early as the Oregon debates of 1846, with the suggestion that, by insisting on possession of the whole of Oregon,

\* F. Bancroft's "Life of William H. Seward," vol. II, p. 472.

and persuading Russia to sell her territory in the north, the United States would secure an unbroken coast-line from the Arctic to California. Tradition has it that the Russian Government was at that time approached on the subject. Certainly a few years later a definite offer of five million dollars was made in an informal way by Senator Gwin, of California. Gwin's proposal elicited the interesting information that, while the Czar's Government deemed the sum named too low for consideration, it would be willing to open negotiations so soon as the Russian Minister of Finance could look into the question. But nothing was done at the time, and, the Civil War soon following, the fact that tentative steps had been taken was quite forgotten until chance directed Seward's attention to Alaska in 1866.

For years there had been friction between Russian and American traders and fishermen, owing to the monopoly exercised by the Russian Fur Company over the waters as well as the lands of the North Pacific. This company was organized in 1799 as a means of developing and exploiting the colonial territories which Russia had acquired in America by virtue of Bering's discoveries in 1741 and subsequent exploration, occupation, and conquest. Be-

sides full commercial privileges, the Russian Government granted it such extensive administrative rights that it enjoyed practically sovereign authority within the sphere of its operations, a power which it wielded with extreme cruelty to the native inhabitants and singular harshness and arrogance to the representatives of other civilized nations. Tempted, nevertheless, by the hope of winning golden profit, foreign merchantmen made their way to Russian America in increasing numbers, and before many years captured a goodly portion of the fur trade which the company was seeking to monopolize. Vigorous protests to St. Petersburg followed, and in 1821 the Czar issued a ukase in which, after claiming for Russia all of the American coast from Bering Straits to the fifty-first parallel, he declared that "it is therefore prohibited to all foreign vessels not only to land on the coasts and islands belonging to Russia as stated above, but also to approach them within less than one hundred Italian miles." At once the United States and Great Britain took umbrage at this assumption of ownership to a region to which they themselves had pretensions, and still more at the trading prohibition. Negotiations were begun on the basis of a territorial adjustment, and ultimately, by treaties concluded with the United States

in 1824 and Great Britain in 1825, Russia agreed to content herself with the coastal country north of latitude fifty-four degrees, forty minutes; and to modify the obnoxious restriction in trade.

This modification, as affected the United States, consisted in opening Alaskan waters and ports to American vessels for a period of ten years "for the purpose of fishing and trading with the natives of the country." Unfortunately, unscrupulous traders so abused the privilege by selling liquor and fire-arms to the natives, in defiance of the Russian regulations, that at the termination of the ten-year period it was not renewed. Some diplomatic correspondence followed, but in the end the United States Government submitted, and in 1837 officially warned American skippers to keep away from Alaska. With the passage of time and the settlement and steady growth of Oregon and California the limitation thus imposed upon American commerce came to be more and more keenly felt. But no measures were taken to remedy the situation until, in 1866, the Legislature of Washington Territory adopted a memorial to President Johnson, in which, after stating that "abundance of codfish, halibut, and salmon of excellent quality have been found along the shores of the Russian possessions," they begged the

President "to obtain such rights and privileges of the Government of Russia as will enable our fishing vessels to visit the ports and harbors of its possessions."

In due course this memorial came to Secretary of State Seward for action; and about the same time he learned that a number of Californians had organized a fur-trading company in the hope of persuading the Russian Government to renew to them the privileges of the Russian Fur Company, whose charter had expired. Forthwith a brilliant prospect unfolded before Seward's boundless imagination. Russia, he was well aware, was beginning to consider her American holdings a source of embarrassment rather than of profit. Mismanagement and the successful competition of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had literally forced a large territorial lease in Russian America as compensation for damages inflicted in violation of the Treaty of 1825, had wrecked the Russian Fur Company. Instead of yielding a handsome revenue, the settlements now showed an annual deficit. Moreover, they were remote and difficult to defend — so weak, in fact, that they were certain to fall at the first attack. That attack, in all probability, would come from Great Britain, Russia's deadliest foe. On the other hand, it would

be to the interest of the United States to forestall any attempt by Great Britain thus to extend her coast line on the Pacific. Besides which, Alaska was unquestionably a country of great possibilities, from both a military and an economic standpoint. If Russia wished or could be induced to sell, there was, in Seward's opinion, every reason why the United States should buy. And rumor afterwards credited him with further believing the purchase might be made the occasion of rallying the nation to the support of the discredited Johnson administration.

Confiding his plans and hopes to no one, he went to work. His first step was to call the attention of the Russian Minister, Edward de Stoeckel, to the Washington memorial, and to urge upon de Stoeckel the desirability of effecting a comprehensive arrangement between Russia and the United States to prevent difficulties arising on account of the Alaska fisheries. He then instructed Cassius M. Clay, the American Minister at St. Petersburg, to take up with the Russian Chancellor, the great Gortchakoff, the question of granting a franchise to the projected California Fur Company. This Clay did, and reported to Seward that the Russian Government seemed to think favorably of his proposal.

"The Russian Government," he similarly wrote to a promoter of the California organization, "has already ceded away its rights in Russian America for a term of years, and the Russo-American Company has also ceded the same to the Hudson's Bay Company. This lease expires in June next, and the President of the Russo-American Company tells me that they have been in correspondence with the Hudson's Bay Company about a renewal of the lease for another term of twenty-five or thirty years. Until he receives a definite answer he cannot enter into negotiations with us or your California company. My opinion is that if he can get off with the Hudson's Bay Company he will do so, when we can make some arrangement with the Russo-American Company." \*

Meantime, de Stoeckel had returned to St. Petersburg on leave of absence, and the attitude of his superiors soon underwent a complete change. Whether this was a result of representations made by Seward to de Stoeckel before his departure it is impossible to say, the veil of secrecy in which the negotiations were conducted not having been entirely lifted to the present day. In any event, the eager Secretary of State was informed that Russia had no

\* "The Works of Charles Sumner," vol. XI, p. 208.

inclination to make temporary and minor arrangements of the nature proposed, but would willingly enter into negotiations looking to a sale of her American possessions. The story is told that, on the very night de Stoeckel was leaving St. Petersburg to resume his official duties in Washington, he was abruptly accosted by the Archduke Constantine, the Czar's brother and chief adviser, and given permission to negotiate a treaty of cession.

Arriving at Washington early in March, 1867, the preliminaries were quickly arranged. Seward's first offer of five million dollars was met by a counter-demand for ten millions, de Stoeckel finally agreeing to accept seven. Then a slight hitch arose on the question of the rights and privileges still held by the Russian Fur Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, Seward insisting that the territory must be delivered to the United States free of all encumbrances, and offering to pay in addition two hundred thousand dollars if this demand were met. De Stoeckel consenting, the terms of the proposed treaty were telegraphed to St. Petersburg via the Atlantic cable, which had been put into successful operation only the year before. Anxiously Seward awaited the response, fearful lest it should come too late to permit of action by Congress, which had assembled

in extra session to insure execution by President Johnson of the reconstruction bill recently passed over his veto. But the Secretary's anxiety was short-lived. Before the end of March the desired permission had been received.

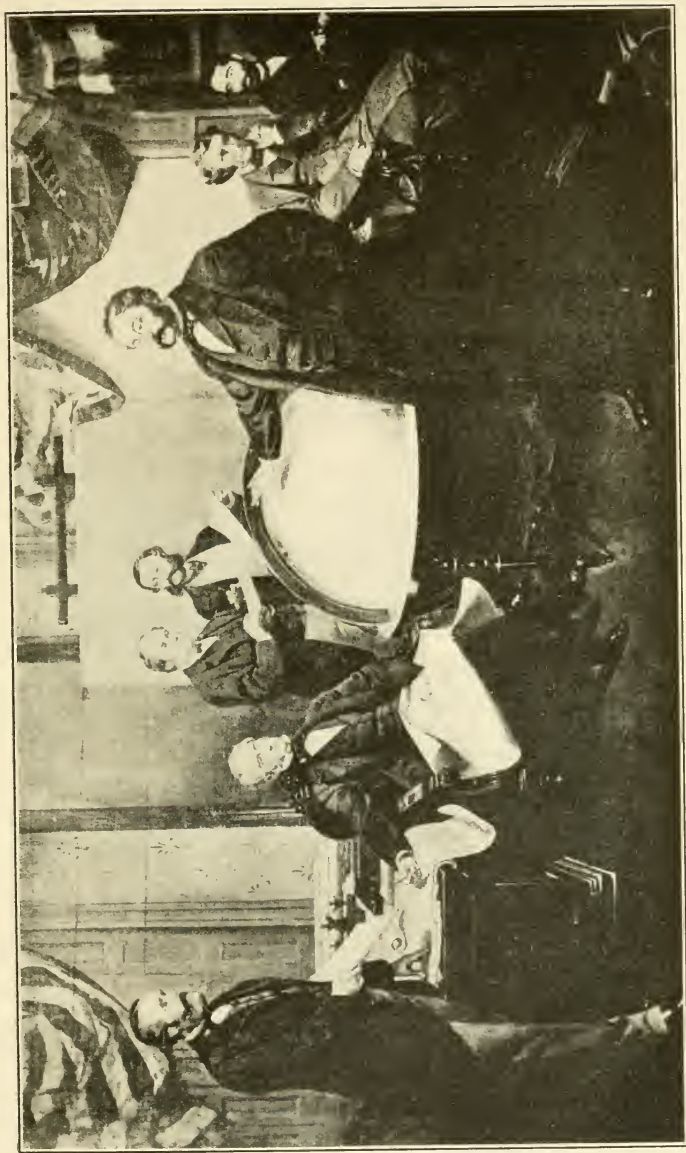
Then Seward acted with a promptitude unparalleled in the annals of diplomacy. He was at home, playing whist with his family, when de Stoeckel, on the evening of March 29, called to inform him that the imperial consent had been given. "If you like, Mr. Seward," said he, "I will come to the department to-morrow, and we can draw up the treaty." "Ah," responded Seward, pushing back his chair from the whist table, "why wait until to-morrow, Mr. de Stoeckel? Let us make the treaty to-night." To de Stoeckel's objection that the State Department was closed and that his own secretaries were scattered about Washington, Seward insistently replied: "If you can muster your legation before midnight, you will find me at the department, which will be open and ready for business." Carried away by Seward's enthusiasm, de Stoeckel gasped acquiescence, and soon messengers were hurrying in all directions to summon department and legation officials. At four o'clock on the morning of March 30, after unremitting toil throughout the night, the treaty transferring

Alaska from Russia to the United States was engrossed, signed, sealed, and ready for transmission to the Senate.\*

There its sponsor was to be Charles Sumner, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Even from Sumner Seward had kept the secret of his negotiations until de Stoeckel brought him the welcome news from St. Petersburg, and the Massachusetts Senator's amazement on learning of the treaty may be better imagined than described. He promised, none the less, to use all his influence to secure its ratification, though by no means in favor of it himself. "The Russian treaty," he wrote to a friend a few days later, "tried me severely; abstractly I am against further accessions of territory unless by the free choice of the inhabitants. But this question was perplexed by considerations of politics and comity and the engagements already entered into by the Government. I hesitated to take the responsibility of defeating it."† Others were outspoken in their hostility to the treaty and in denunciation of Seward for having arranged it. In fact, a flood of criticism rolled towards Washington

\* This account is based on the intimate narrative given by F. W. Seward in his "Seward at Washington," vol. II, pp. 348-49.

† Sumner to John Bright, in E. L. Pierce's "Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner," vol. IV, pp. 318-19.



THE SIGNING OF THE ALASKAN TREATY  
From a painting by Leutze.



from almost every section of the country, and especially from the States of the East and Middle West. Russian America was declared to be a "barren, worthless, God-forsaken region," whose only products were "icebergs and polar bears." Its streams were "glaciers," its ground was "frozen six feet deep," for vegetation it had nothing but "mosses." Some one, with cheap sarcasm, suggested that it be called "Walrussia," and there were many who thought that "Seward's Folly" was the only fitting designation for it. All of which had no effect whatever on the imperturbable Secretary of State, who amused himself and his friends by reading from old newspapers the similar comment passed in former times on Jefferson's purchase of the "desert waste" of Louisiana, and the later acquisition of the "noxious swamps" of "snake-infested" Florida.

What did disturb him was the thought that the Senate, influenced by the treaty's evident unpopularity among the nation at large, might reject it. But in the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations he had an all-powerful ally. Whatever his private opinions, Sumner for the time being kept them rigidly to himself, and while the treaty was being considered in committee, labored diligently in the preparation of a speech which should insure

ratification by an overwhelming vote. This speech, afterwards elaborated and published as a monograph on the resources and possibilities of Alaska,\* he delivered April 9 to an audience that followed his every word with the greatest interest. He began by hinting at the reasons which had induced Russia to part with her holdings, and reminded his hearers of the motives impelling Napoleon to cede Louisiana. "Perhaps," he suggested, a "similar record may be made hereafter with regard to the present cession. . . . All must see that in those 'coming events' which now, more than ever, 'cast their shadows before,' it will be for her advantage not to hold outlying possessions for which, thus far, she has obtained no income commensurate with the possible expense for their protection. . . . In ceding possessions so little within the sphere of her empire, embracing more than one hundred nations or tribes, Russia gives up no part of herself. And even if she did, the considerable price paid, the alarm of war which begins to fill our ears, and the sentiments of friendship declared for the United States, would explain the transaction." Turning to the reasons why the United States should accept the cession, he sum-

\* The student will find it printed in full in "The Works of Charles Sumner," vol. XI, pp. 181-349.

marized in vivid outline all the information he had been able to obtain concerning the timber, minerals, furs, fisheries, physical features, climate, and inhabitants of Alaska, drawing a picture in sharp contrast with that of the "iceberg and polar bear" critics. It was an unanswerable argument, silencing all opposition so far as the Senate was concerned, and that same day the necessary "advice and consent" to ratification was given by the impressive vote of thirty-seven to two, Fessenden and Morrill of Vermont alone voting in the negative.

Danger now threatened, however, from the House of Representatives, where certain members, jealous of their rights, asserted that the President and the Senate were in duty bound to consult the House with reference to a treaty involving the payment of money — this view finding its justification in the fact that appropriation bills had to originate in the House. For more than a year, and until long after the United States had taken possession of its new Territory, the necessary bill appropriating the seven million two hundred thousand dollars called for by the treaty was not passed, and in passing it the House took occasion to assert its right to consider the stipulations of a treaty of this kind before it could go into effect. Incidentally the debate revealed

the continuance of a widespread hostility to the cession. "The country," declared Washburn, of Wisconsin, the leader in the attack, "is absolutely without value," and he condemned the treaty acquiring it as "an outrage on the rights of the American people."

But Seward still rejoiced in his achievement, and died accounting it among his most meritorious efforts. To the present generation, well aware of the riches that have since been discovered in the supposedly icy wastes of Alaska — the name of which, by the way, was selected by Seward himself — there cannot be the slightest doubt that he had indeed labored wisely and well for his country.

## CHAPTER VIII

### WILLIAM McKINLEY AND THE TRANSMARINE POSSESSIONS

AFTER the acquisition of Alaska in 1867 more than thirty years passed before the United States made another territorial addition. But in the interval there were many indications that the expansionistic impulse was still active. Attempts were made to purchase Denmark's possessions in the West Indies; the annexation of San Domingo was vigorously urged, particularly by President Grant; there was much talk of bringing Cuba into the American fold; and, finally, the idea of securing a foothold in the mid-Pacific by annexing the Hawaiian Islands found wide favor. For one reason or another all of these projects failed, saving only the annexation of Hawaii. And the accomplishment of this, although it could hardly have been delayed much longer, must be credited, not to any premeditated design, but to an unforeseen event that brought about the acquisition, not of Hawaii alone, but of new lands far more extensive and valuable than Hawaii.

This event was the unexpected outbreak of a war with Spain — a war waged not in any spirit of conquest or spoliation, but in the great cause of humanity. The seeds of the conflict were sown in the autumn of 1896, when in order to crush a rebellion that had begun in the island colony of Cuba the preceding year, the Spanish commanding general put into effect a so-called reconcentration policy. He had discovered that the great majority of the Cuban peasantry sympathized with and gave aid to the rebels. So, in order to cut off this source of assistance, he ordered the soldiery to compel the people to abandon their homes and move to the vicinity of the fortified towns. Here, under the watchful eye of brutal guards, they were penned up like cattle. Crowded together in noisome quarters, poorly clothed, lacking good food, and forced to drink impure water, these unfortunates died by the thousand. At the spectacle a cry of horror and wrath went up from the whole civilized world.

In especial, the people and Government of the United States voiced the universal indignation, President Cleveland sounding a warning note to Spain in the course of his last Message to Congress. But diplomatic hints and open protests alike went unheeded. No matter what the cost in human life

the Spanish Government was resolved to stamp out the rebellion and re-establish its authority. Soon the entire island, seat of vast and prosperous plantations, was transformed into a bleeding, desolate waste. And still, with incredible heroism, the rebels maintained themselves against a long succession of troops sent out from Spain. Again the United States remonstrated, sending a new Minister to Madrid with special instructions to emphasize the necessity of terminating the unendurable state of affairs in Cuba. The sole result was the recall of the barbaric commanding general and a modification of the reconcentration order. Fighting continued as before, with all its attendant horrors. On the night of February 15, 1898, the climax was reached when the United States battleship Maine, while lying peacefully at anchor in Havana harbor, was blown to pieces with a loss of more than two hundred and sixty officers and men.

At once, from Maine to California, the length and breadth of the land, rose a demand for vengeance, a cry for war, instant war. But there were those who felt that Spain should yet be given a chance, that the responsibility for this appalling catastrophe must be fixed before proceeding to extremities. And chief among the restraining influences that

imposed patience on the wrathful nation was its new President, William McKinley. He had already denounced Spain's Cuban policy in measured but forceful terms. He had urged upon the Spanish Government the importance of effecting a speedy and honorable peace with the Cubans. He had plainly intimated that, failing such a settlement, the United States, out of self-interest as well as for humanity's sake, would feel obliged to resort to armed intervention. But all the time he had been hopeful that war between the United States and Spain might yet be averted. And now that the crisis had been reached in this strange and terrible fashion, he was more than ever determined to give Spain opportunity to end her sanguinary dealings with her unhappy Cuban subjects. Cuba, not the Maine, must be the issue. If war came, it must be a righteous war, not a war of blind, unreasoning revenge.

A fine, strong man, this McKinley — a man greatly misunderstood in his day, and only now beginning to be appreciated. The dominant figure in our study of the latest steps in the territorial growth of the United States, it will be well to fix him clearly in our mind's eye. A man of dignified, impressive, self-contained presence that added con-



WILLIAM MCKINLEY



siderably to his five feet nine of physical stature, he looked at one frankly out of honest eyes. His very handshake bespoke his nature — warm, ardent, sincere. Yet he was not a man to be read at a glance. In private life full of humor, fond of a joke and a good story, his public demeanor was reserved, solemn, almost distant. He inspired in the multitude none of the enthusiasm that had been felt for Jackson, Clay, and other national idols. But it would be hard to name another American in whom the people at large felt such abiding confidence. Men trusted in him because of his patent devotion to the highest ideals — ideals of Christian living, of domestic virtue, of public rectitude — and because of his obvious and phenomenal insight into the desires and needs of the nation. This last characteristic brought from his enemies, and from those who were not his enemies but knew him not at all, the accusation that he was truckling and time-serving and a slave to the fitful changes of public opinion, letting himself be drawn with it whithersoever it might lead. But the truth was very different. On occasion — and the interval between the destruction of the *Maine* and the outbreak of war was one of such occasions — he could and did manfully withstand public opinion. His strength

lay in his instinctive ability to grasp the sentiments of the nation and direct those sentiments along lines that made for national safety, honor, and greatness.\*

He was always a believer in the destiny and capacity of the United States for great achievements. From the days of his young manhood he translated that belief into action. When the first gun rang out in the Civil War, he was a poor, unknown youth struggling for an education in a small Ohio town. Thither came an orator bearing Lincoln's call for troops. "Our flag has been fired on," he cried;

\* In a letter from George B. Cortelyou, one of the men who knew McKinley best, to John F. Gaffey, President of the McKinley Association of Connecticut, occurs this striking and just appreciation: "We cannot too often repeat to the American people the story of his life; his youthful patriotism; his devotion to his mother; his fine loyalty in all the sacred relations of home; his long years of public service, marked by ever-increasing growth in the affection and regard of the people. Such a life and such a service, even had they not known the great responsibilities and great opportunities of the Presidency, would have entitled him to a place high on the honor roll of the nation. But from the day that he became President, he grew and broadened in his grasp of public questions, in his realization of the needs and weaknesses and the possibilities of our citizenship, in his determination so to administer the affairs of his great office as to contribute in substantial degree to the Republic's progress along the pathway of enlightenment and civilization. His achievements have gone into history, to be told and retold in the coming ages. As we gain a better perspective of the eventful years of his administration, we shall come to know more and more the greatness and nobility of his nature and the fulness of his consecration to the welfare of all the people. He died as he lived — to the last, gentle, patient, considerate, forgiving, and the words of his faith and of his hope fell upon this stricken land with the beauty and dignity of a benediction."

“who will be the first to defend it?” Out from the throng stepped a little group of young men, McKinley among them. For fourteen months he served in the ranks, his one thought the preservation of the Union. Throughout the war he took part in every engagement fought by his regiment, the celebrated Twenty-third Ohio. At Antietam his bravery won him a lieutenancy. For gallantry at Opequan, Cedar Creek, and Fisher’s Hill Lincoln made him a major by brevet. He figured in the last act of the long conflict, the grand review at Washington of the united armies of Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan. Then, laying down his sword, he returned to Ohio to begin the study of law. After which, in a few short years, he embarked on the Congressional career that won him speedy fame as a builder of Greater America. From the first he was identified with the tariff movement that did so much to lift the United States to a foremost place among the nations of the world. Soon McKinley and Protection became synonymous terms. As early as 1888 he might have had the Republican nomination for the Presidency had it not been for his loyalty to John Sherman. Again in 1892 there was a determined movement to nominate him. And finally, in 1896, the prediction made by Blaine many years earlier found its

vindication. William McKinley was nominated and elected Chief Magistrate of the United States.

So there he stood in the White House, in the chill spring days of 1898, face to face with the prospect of war. Did war come, there could be only one result — certain and overwhelming victory for the United States. Since the days when Jackson challenged the wrath of Spain by his daring raids into Florida, the disparity between the strength and resources of the two countries had become constantly and glaringly more apparent. On the one side was a young, lusty, vigorous people, in the full flush of a long and almost uninterrupted period of progress and prosperity. On the other, a decrepit, enervated, backward nation. No more convincing illustration of the material power of the United States could have been found than the action of Congress in voting an appropriation of fifty million dollars to be placed at the President's disposal "as an emergency fund for national defense."

"This morning," wrote Minister Woodford from Madrid, "the papers announce the unanimous passage by the House of Mr. Cannon's bill putting fifty million dollars at your disposal. It has not excited the Spaniards — it has stunned them. To appropriate fifty millions out of money in the Treas-

ury, without borrowing a cent, demonstrates wealth and power. Even Spain can see this. To put this money, without restriction and by unanimous vote, absolutely at your disposal demonstrates entire confidence in you by all parties. The Ministry and the press are simply stunned.”\* But Spain, instead of accepting the sufficient hint, replied by securing a war loan of forty million dollars from the Bank of Spain. Even the patient McKinley’s patience became exhausted. On April 11 he sent his significant message to Congress — “In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests, which give us the right and the duty to speak and to act, the war in Cuba must stop.” Before the month was out the first gun in the conflict with Spain had been fired and an epoch-making despatch had flashed around the world to an American naval officer at Hongkong. This officer was George Dewey, commanding the Asiatic squadron, and the despatch, which he had been expectantly awaiting, simply said: “War has commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to Philippine Islands. Commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet. You

\* “House Document No. 1, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session,” p. 684.

must capture vessels or destroy. Use utmost endeavors. — LONG.”\*

For our purpose it is not necessary to dwell on the splendid manner in which Dewey responded to this appeal — steaming into Manila harbor and crushing the Spanish fleet under the very guns of the protecting Spanish forts. The important point to us is the fact that Dewey’s victory led directly to territorial acquisitions by the United States. First among these, in point of time, was the acquisition not of the Philippine but of the Hawaiian Islands. Ever since 1893, when the native monarchy was overturned in a revolution fostered, if not fathered, by American settlers, there had been a determined movement looking to the incorporation of Hawaii in the American domain. This idea, in fact, had first been mooted as early as 1853, when Marcy proposed to annex the islands lest they should fall into the hands of other Powers, and also as a means of strengthening American influence in the Pacific.† But annexation found few advocates in the United States until the revolution of 1893 had become an accomplished fact. And even then it was bitterly

\* “House Document No. 3, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session,” p. 6.

† A convenient summary of the Marcy negotiations is contained in Willis F. Johnson’s “A Century of Expansion,” pp. 235-37.

opposed so soon as the discovery was made that the Hawaiians expected to be admitted into the Union on a basis of Statehood. Still, the influences in favor of annexation were so strong that a treaty was actually negotiated and submitted to the United States Senate by President Harrison. Before action could be had, Harrison was succeeded by Cleveland, who promptly withdrew the treaty and, after careful inquiry, refused to resubmit it, declaring that the lawful government of Hawaii had been disrupted through American agency and that under the circumstances it would be grossly improper for the United States to annex the islands. After this the question slumbered until 1897, when the Republican party returned to power and a new annexation treaty was negotiated. It was seen, however, that the Statehood idea would still prove an insuperable obstacle; and accordingly, acting on the precedent established in the annexation of Texas, it was decided to endeavor to annex Hawaii by joint resolution of both Houses of Congress, the resolution to provide merely that the islands should become "a part of the territory of the United States."

This was the situation when the cable brought from the far East the news of Dewey's success. Following his first despatch came a second, announ-

cing that he could take the city of Manila at any time. But it was evident that he did not have a force strong enough to hold it, if Spain should send out reinforcements, and at once the President determined to rush troops to his aid. With this decision, and with the open violations of neutrality by the people of Hawaii, who allowed the American warships and transports to use Honolulu as a naval base, an additional reason was found for annexing the islands. From the strategic if from no other point of view, they were certain to prove of incalculable value to the United States. Perceiving this, McKinley was quick to act. On his recommendation, the joint resolution was brought up and adopted, in the House by a vote of two hundred and nine to ninety-one, and in the Senate by forty-two to twenty-one. July 7, 1898, it was definitely approved. Little more than a month later, and, oddly enough, on the same day that the peace protocol, marking the beginning of the end of the Spanish war, was signed at Washington, the United States Government took formal possession of Hawaii. Thus was consummated the first territorial addition of the McKinley administration.

It was not one, however, in which McKinley himself played the predominating rôle that he achieved

in the later acquisitions, and more particularly in the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. The war, as need hardly be recalled, was a succession of unbroken victories for American arms. Sampson and Schley destroyed a Spanish fleet in Cuban waters with almost as little difficulty as Dewey had experienced in wiping out that other Spanish fleet in far-away Manila Bay. Roosevelt and his Rough Riders attained international fame on Cuban soil. Miles, with scarcely an effort, mastered Porto Rico, whose native inhabitants built triumphal arches in the invaders' honor. In the Spanish mid-Pacific possessions of the Ladrone group, a single war-ship sufficed for the capture of the island of Guam. Utterly at the mercy of the United States, Spain in four short months was glad to sue for peace. And by the terms of the protocol, signed August 12, as preliminary to the conclusion of a definite treaty, she expressly relinquished "all claim of sovereignty over and title to Cuba," and ceded to the United States the island of Porto Rico, "and also an island in the Ladrone group to be selected by the United States."\*

The crucial problem, for the United States as well as for Spain, was the question of what should be

\* "House Document No. 1, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session," pp. 828-30.

done with the Philippines. Inhabited by fierce and warlike tribes, these islands had long been in a chronic state of insurrection against the characteristic misrule of their Spanish overlords. In 1896 there was an organized uprising, which was stamped out only through the defection of its leaders, who were bribed to leave the islands. One of these leaders, a shrewd and quick-witted Malay named Aguinaldo, was at Hongkong when Dewey received his orders to attack the Spanish fleet, and he at once resolved to return to the Philippines and organize a new rebellion. Carrying out this resolution, he soon raised a native force strong enough to invest Manila by land, while Dewey blockaded it with his warships. And, late in June, though without any official recognition from the American Admiral, the fiery Filipinos formally declared the islands free and independent, and elected Aguinaldo as their first President.

Here, then, was one perplexing factor in the situation. There were many others. Hardly had the echoes of the battle of Manila Bay died away before it was realized that if the logical fruits of Dewey's victory were reaped, the American nation would enter on a completely new phase of its existence. It would, for the first time, take a place among the

colony-owning nations, and be obliged to undertake, in both Hawaii and the Philippines, the governance of dependent and inferior peoples who must for a long time, possibly forever, remain in a state of tutelage. In the case of Hawaii, absorption by the United States had been a result not of conquest or coercion, but of the expressed desire of the inhabitants. The Filipinos, on the other hand, were believed to aspire to independence, and might be expected to oppose American sovereignty as bitterly as they had Spanish domination. If, under such circumstances, the islands were brought under American control, against the consent of the governed, what would become of the bed-rock principles on which the United States had been founded? And, in any event, where under the Constitution could authority be had for the establishment of a colonial system, for the inclusion under the American flag of dependencies whose inhabitants were not fit, and might never become fit, to enjoy the rights and privileges of full American citizenship?

These considerations, reinforced by others which it is not necessary to detail here, led a certain element of the American people, including some of the most thoughtful and public-spirited citizens, to denounce the idea of colonial and transmarine ex-

pansion, or, as they preferred to call it, the "imperialistic" idea. As early as June 15 — the very day, by the way, that the House of Representatives was voting to annex Hawaii — a mass-meeting was held in Faneuil Hall, Boston, to protest against oversea expansion; and a resolution was adopted declaring that any annexation of territory as a result of the war would be a violation of national faith. This resolution, of course, rested on the avowed purpose with which the United States had gone to war — namely, to free Cuba from the yoke of Spain. "I speak not of forcible annexation," President McKinley had said in his 1897 Message to Congress, "because that is not to be thought of, and under our code of morality that would be criminal aggression." What the "anti-imperialists" failed to appreciate was the fact that the reference here was to the suspicion, widely entertained abroad, that the United States meant to force a war on Spain in order to acquire Cuba for herself. The national faith was indeed pledged so far as Cuba was concerned — but no farther.

None the less, the opponents of expansion maintained their agitation. Under the auspices of an "Anti-Imperialist League," a systematic campaign was begun to influence public opinion against the

idea of embarking on a colonial policy, and, in especial, against holding the Philippines. Representative citizens like John Sherman, Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Carl Schurz, Charles Eliot Norton, Charles Francis Adams, David Starr Jordan, John G. Carlisle, the Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, George F. Edmunds, Samuel Bowles, George S. Boutwell, and Edward Atkinson joined in appeals to the nation, asserting their belief that retention of the Philippines would be "inconsistent with the principles of this Republic, and fraught with danger to its peace and to the peace of the world." With unpatriotic fatuity, some of the more zealous among the "anti-imperialists" even went so far as to oppose a colonial policy on the ground that by its treatment of the negroes, the Indians, and the native Californians, the American nation had proved itself unfit for ruling subject races. And so soon as it was known that the Government had definitely determined to retain the Philippines, the more violent opponents of expansion concentrated their wrath on the person of one man, President McKinley, whom they did not hesitate to denounce as the "crowning hypocrite of the age" and "the leader of the imperialist frenzy."

Now, McKinley was no hypocrite, yet undoubtedly the "anti-imperialists" were right in regarding him as the man above all others responsible for adding the Philippines to the American domain. From first to last he was the controlling spirit in deciding the policy the United States should pursue. But in deciding as he did, he was thoroughly conscientious. The ethical side of the problem was ever uppermost in his mind. What do we owe to ourselves and what do we owe to the Filipinos? There were, he clearly saw, several courses open to the United States. The islands might be retained, temporarily or in perpetuity. They might be ceded to some European Power, or to Japan. They might be returned to Spain, in whole or in part. Or they might be turned over to the Filipinos. Which course would it be right and proper for the United States to adopt? The "anti-imperialists," as we have seen, lost no time in deciding that retention, at any rate, would be a highly improper course. McKinley, placed as he was in a position of the greatest responsibility, hesitated to imitate them in leaping at a conclusion.

For a while, indeed, he had little opportunity to attack the problem. As John D. Long, his Secretary of the Navy, grimly said in a conversation with

the writer, "We were too busy carrying on war to think much about the Philippines." And for this reason the signing of the peace protocol found the President still undecided. Hence, unlike the definite provisions relating to Cuba and Porto Rico, the Philippine clause in the protocol simply read: "The United States will occupy and hold the city, bay, and harbor of Manila pending the conclusion of a treaty of peace which shall determine the control, disposition, and government of the Philippines." In the month that intervened between the signing of the protocol and the writing of the preliminary instructions of Messrs. Day, Davis, Frye, Gray, and Reid, the American peace commissioners, the President doubtless made considerable headway in solving the stupendous problem before him. For we find him instructing the commissioners that "the United States cannot accept less than the cession in full right and sovereignty of the island of Luzon."\* But he was still far from satisfied that this would adequately meet the situation. What he wanted, before definitely making up his mind, was absolute and exact information regarding the state of affairs in the Philippines.

\* "House Document No. 1, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session," p. 908.

This information was to no small extent supplied on the arrival in Washington of General F. V. Greene, who had been in command of one of the expeditions sent to assist Dewey in capturing and holding Manila. Besides submitting a detailed report to the President, General Greene concisely summed up the results of his personal investigations in a brief memorandum, in which he declared in part:

“If the United States evacuate these islands, anarchy and civil war will immediately ensue and lead to foreign intervention. The insurgents were furnished arms and the moral support of the navy prior to our arrival, and we cannot ignore obligations, either to the insurgents or to foreign nations, which our own acts have imposed upon us. The Spanish Government is completely demoralized, and Spanish power is dead beyond possibility of resurrection. Spain would be unable to govern these islands if we surrendered them. . . . On the other hand, the Filipinos cannot govern the country without the support of some strong nation. They acknowledge this themselves, and say their desire is for independence under American protection; but they have only vague ideas as to what our relative positions would be. . . . “The length of our occu-



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GEORGE DEWEY



pation would depend on circumstances as developed in the future, but should be determined solely in our discretion without obligation to or consultation with other Powers. This plan can only be worked out by careful study by the Paris Commission [the American peace commissioners], and they should have advice and full information from some one who has been here during our occupation and thoroughly understands the situation. It is not understood in America, and unless properly dealt with at Paris will inevitably lead to future complications and possibly war.”\*

Testimony to the same effect soon came from Paris, where the American peace commissioners while negotiating the first clauses of the treaty gave hearings to American officers and others having a first-hand knowledge of Philippine affairs. Their testimony, however, did not at once produce unanimity of opinion among the commissioners. October 25 they cabled to Washington statements indicating that Judge Day favored occupation of only a part of the islands, that Senator Gray did not deem it wise to take the Philippines either in whole or in part, and that Messrs. Frye, Davis, and Reid agreed in

\* “Executive Document B, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session,” Part 2, pp. 374-75.

advocating retention of the entire archipelago. With this majority view the President was by now in hearty concurrence. Back flashed a despatch to Paris, clear-cut, concise, and emphatic:

"The information which has come to the President since your departure convinces him that the acceptance of the cession of Luzon alone, leaving the rest of the islands subject to Spanish rule, or to be the subject of future contention, cannot be justified on political, commercial, or humanitarian grounds. The cession must be of the whole archipelago or none. The latter is wholly inadmissible, and the former must therefore be required. The President reaches this conclusion after most thorough consideration of the whole subject, and is deeply sensible of the grave responsibilities it will impose, believing that this course will entail less trouble than any other and besides will best subserve the interests of the people involved, for whose welfare we cannot escape responsibility. — HAY."\*

Thus, in a few words, was summed up the result of weary weeks of anxious deliberation. Only those who knew the President well can realize the mental and spiritual ordeal through which he passed before

\* "House Document No. 1, Fifty-fifth Congress, Third Session," p. 935.

arriving at his final decision. But it is easy to appreciate how greatly he was cheered and fortified by the consciousness that he could count on the support of the nation. For vehement and energetic as the "anti-imperialists" were, they were in reality a feeble minority. Public sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of the policy which in the end was held by the President to be the best, the wisest, and the most honorable the United States could adopt.

But it is important to note that in trending as it did, public sentiment was inspired by mixed motives. The ethical considerations which may fairly be said to have been paramount in McKinley's mind exercised only a partial influence on the minds of the great mass of Americans. They, there can be no doubt, were largely actuated by the old-time instinct for expansion, the instinct that in the early days led their forefathers across the Alleghanies, across the Mississippi, and across the plains until at last they set foot on the shore of the Pacific. And there was, too, a commercial motive, the motive of utilizing the Philippines as an entering wedge to gain for the United States an opening in the still undeveloped markets of the far East. Mixed motives, in truth, partly instinctive, partly selfish, and partly humanitarian, but combining to impel the great

Republic along the true path of destiny and duty.

And so it came about that after Spain, solaced by the payment of twenty million dollars, had finally consented to sign away her rights to the Philippines, the peace treaty received ratification in the United States Senate, despite the stubborn opposition of the "anti-imperialist" forces. With the exchange of ratifications Spain abandoned her last vestige of sovereignty in the New World, where she had once lorded it supreme, and the United States became the acknowledged possessor of the Philippine Islands, Porto Rico, and Guam. Since then only two territorial additions have been made — Tutuila and the smaller Samoan islands which fell to the United States in the partition of 1899, and the ten-mile Canal Zone on the Isthmus of Panama, acquired in 1904. It would, however, be folly to assert that the last chapter in the history of the territorial growth of the United States has been written. The nation is still young, still vigorous, still ambitious. Great things lie before it. And as it has done in the past, so will it do in the future — reach out, extend, grow.

## CHAPTER IX

### HINTS FOR FURTHER READING ✓

THERE is no exhaustive history of the territorial growth of the United States. Several years ago such a work was projected by Professors Channing and Hart, of Harvard University, but for some reason it was not written, and no one has since essayed the task. There are, however, a number of books sufficiently detailed to prove useful both to the student and to the general reader.

Perhaps the best of these is Willis F. Johnson's "A Century of Expansion" (1903). Dr. Johnson's point of view is that of a student who apprehends clearly the forces contributing to territorial growth, and if his book is disfigured by certain unfortunate errors in detail, and is further marred by inadequate appreciation of the evidence bearing on the policy adopted by the United States Government with regard to the acquisition of Texas, Oregon, and California, it is nevertheless helpfully informative. It also is a book that lends itself well to steady

reading, being written in a fluent, attractive style. Less readable but distinctly useful are Edmund J. Carpenter's "The American Advance" (1903), William A. Mowry's "The Territorial Growth of the United States" (1902), and Oscar P. Austin's "Steps in the Expansion of our Territory" (1903). Of these, Dr. Mowry's book is the most elaborate, but it is written largely from secondary sources and seldom gets down to the heart of its subject. As one critic has said: "Dr. Mowry regards our territorial acquisitions as a series of special providences, and upon this theory contents himself with the externals of negotiation, without making any attempt to present the underlying causes." Edward Bicknell's "The Territorial Acquisitions of the United States" (revised edition, 1904) is to be recommended as a handy little pocket treatise, clear, concise, and as a rule accurate.

Of a somewhat different character from any of the foregoing is Edwin Erle Sparks' "The Expansion of the American People" (1900). Social as well as — and, indeed, more than — territorial expansion is the subject of this volume, in which many novel and significant facts relating to the growth of the Republic are presented in an interesting form, and with a wealth of pictorial illustration that adds

not a little to the value of the book. W. E. Griffis' "The Romance of Conquest" (1899) similarly includes much besides the story of territorial growth, and contains chapters on the Revolution, the war with France, the naval campaign against the Barbary corsairs, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. Its chief interest lies in its emphasis on the role played by the Navy in promoting national development. The diplomacy of expansion may conveniently be studied in A. B. Hart's "The Foundations of American Foreign Policy" (1901), John Bassett Moore's "American Diplomacy" (1905), and John W. Foster's "A Century of American Diplomacy" (1901). With these might also be read, as embodying clear-cut views of the expansionistic tendencies of the present era, A. R. Colquhoun's "Greater America" (1904), and A. C. Coolidge's "The United States as a World Power" (1908). The various territorial treaties, up to and including the Alaska Purchase, will be found in "Treaties and Conventions concluded between the United States and Other Powers," published as "Senate Executive Document No. 47, Forty-Eighth Congress, Second Session."

Turning to the literature of the early westward movement, the filling up of the Middle West under

the leadership of Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark, John Sevier, and their fellow pioneers, we find three general works of outstanding importance. The most scholarly and complete are Justin Winsor's two volumes, "The Mississippi Basin" (1895), and "The Westward Movement" (1897). The first surveys in painstaking fashion the struggle between France and England from 1697 to 1763 for possession of the Middle West, while the second reviews the history of the same section in the formative period of its colonization from 1763 to 1798. No one desiring thorough knowledge of the events transpiring in the Middle West during the time of its exploration and first settlement should ignore Dr. Winsor's volumes. But it must be said that they form rather difficult reading, and it is a pleasure to be able to supplement them with the lively narrative contained in Theodore Roosevelt's "The Winning of the West" (four-volume edition, 1889-96, six-volume edition, 1900). Later research has shown Mr. Roosevelt in error on some important points, but has also served to emphasize the fact that he has signally enlarged our knowledge of the pioneering movement. The mastery of details he displays, the clearness of insight, and the ability to marshal his facts and present his conclusions in a

graphic and convincing way, combine to place his "Winning of the West" among the really noteworthy American historical productions.

The westward movement may also be studied to advantage by the aid of the "American Nation" co-operative history of the United States (1905-08), though here it is necessary to follow it through a succession of volumes, namely: "France in America," by R. G. Thwaites; "Preliminaries of the Revolution," by G. E. Howard; "The American Revolution," by C. H. Van Tyne; "The Confederation and the Constitution," by A. C. McLaughlin; "The Federalist System," by J. S. Bassett; "The Jeffersonian System," by E. Channing; and, for a slightly later period, "The Rise of American Nationality," by K. C. Babcock, and "The Rise of the New West," by F. J. Turner. In making use of this work, the student is advised at all times to consult the analytic index that forms its last volume. Among works of minor importance, less scholarly and critical but still useful, may be mentioned "A History of the Mississippi Valley, from its Discovery to the End of Foreign Domination" (1903), by John R. Spears and Alonzo H. Clark, and James K. Hosmer's "A Short History of the Mississippi Valley" (1901).

For those who wish to go into the subject in still greater detail, a vast fund of literature is available in the early State histories of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio; memoirs and reminiscences of the pioneers, and later publications dealing with special aspects of the westward movement. Not all of the early State histories are equally valuable, and all of them have to be read with considerable caution, but the fact remains that they constitute our sole source of information on many questions of the greatest significance. In studying the history of Tennessee the reader will find particularly helpful J. G. M. Ramsey's "The Annals of Tennessee" (1853), and A. W. Putnam's "History of Middle Tennessee" (1859). The early history of Kentucky is told from different angles in H. Marshall's "The History of Kentucky" (1824), Mann Butler's "A History of the Commonwealth of Kentucky" (1836), and Lewis Collins' "History of Kentucky" (revised edition, edited and enlarged by his son, Richard H. Collins, 1878). Collins' work is really encyclopedic, and every subsequent writer on Kentucky is greatly indebted to it. So, too, with Henry Howe's "Historical Collections of Ohio" (1847), and James H. Perkins' "Annals of the West" (1846), an exhaustive compilation covering the entire history of the Mis-

Mississippi Valley from the coming of the Spaniards to the middle of the nineteenth century. The publications of the Filson Club, of Louisville, Kentucky, already cited in the course of the present work, should also be mentioned for the light they throw on the social, economic, and political history of the first trans-Alleghany pioneers.

The life, customs, and manners of these adventurous men and women are admirably depicted in Joseph Doddridge's "Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania from 1763 until 1783 inclusive, with a View of the State of Society and Manners of the First Settlers of the Western Country" (1824). As a description of the home life of the settlers there is nothing comparable with this work. The more adventurous side of their existence may be studied in such books as Wills de Hass' "History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia" (1851), A. C. Withers' "Chronicles of Border Warfare" (1831, or, better, in the edition of 1895, annotated by R. G. Thwaites), Timothy Flint's "Indian Wars of the West" (1833), and John Alexander McClung's "Sketches of Western Adventure" (1832). All of these, judged by the strict standards of modern history writing, are lamentably weak in that they

rely on tradition rather than documentary evidence; yet even so, they preserve for us much that would otherwise have been lost.

Passing from the literature of the early West in general to the literature dealing particularly with the first great Westerner, Daniel Boone, a foremost place must be accorded to R. G. Thwaites' "Daniel Boone" (1902). In writing this biography Dr. Thwaites enjoyed the advantage of being in a position to utilize the great mass of manuscript material collected by the late Lyman C. Draper, and as a result has been able to incorporate in his book many facts unknown to earlier biographers. His work, however, is by no means exhaustive, and it will be well to supplement it by reading John M. Peck's "Life of Daniel Boone" (1847), published as vol. XIII of Sparks' "Library of American Biography, New Series," which is still a valuable book notwithstanding the fact that it was written so long ago. Boone's so-called "autobiography," one of the greatest curiosities in American literature and utilized by all subsequent writers, is contained in John Filson's "The Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucky" (1784), and Gilbert Imlay's "A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America" (1793). A good deal of

sound information bearing on Boone will be found in G. W. Ranck's "Boonesborough, its Founding, Pioneer Struggles, Indian Experiences, Transylvania Days, and Revolutionary Annals" (1901), published as No. 16 of the Filson Club publications. Timothy Flint's "Biographical Memoir of Daniel Boone" (1841) and W. H. Bogart's "Daniel Boone and the Hunters of Kentucky" (1874) are uncritical works, which, however, in some respects repay perusal. For a general bibliography of the literature on Boone, consult W. H. Miner's "Contribution toward a bibliography of writings concerning Daniel Boone" (1901.) It might perhaps be added that the present writer has in preparation a book, "Daniel Boone and the Wilderness Road," designed to serve the double purpose of a biography of Boone and a study of the opening up of the early West.

The Louisiana Purchase forms the subject of a number of works, and has naturally been given much space in general histories. A masterly account is found in the first two volumes of Henry Adams' "History of the United States of America during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison" (1889-91), written from sources hitherto untouched, thoroughly scholarly, and marred only by an obvious prejudice against Jefferson and Madison.

As correctives of this prejudice, and as being in themselves able and informative, the reader is referred to the accounts contained in Edward Channing's "The Jeffersonian System" (1906), published as vol. XII of the "American Nation," James Schouler's "History of the United States of America under the Constitution," vol. II (1882), and John B. McMaster's "History of the People of the United States," vols. II, III (1885, 1892). Among works dealing more especially with the Purchase the student will find considerable information of value in Ripley Hitchcock's "The Louisiana Purchase and the Exploration, Early History, and Building of the West" (1903), and F. A. Ogg's "The Opening of the Mississippi" (1904). In Francis Barbé Marbois' "History of Louisiana" (1830), the story of the Purchase is told from the point of view of one of the French negotiators, while the influence of Napoleon in promoting the sale is emphasized in James K. Hosmer's "The History of the Louisiana Purchase" (1902). W. J. M. Sloane's "The World Aspects of the Louisiana Purchase" (in *The American Historical Review*, vol. IX., pp. 507-521), and C. F. Robertson's "The Louisiana Purchase in its influence upon the American System" (in the American Historical Association's "Papers," vol. I, no. 4),

are two stimulating essays which may well be read.

Much material is available for documentary study by those interested in going that far into the subject. The reports, letters, etc., which passed in the course of the negotiations are contained in "American State Papers — Foreign Relations," vol. IV, and "American State Papers — Public Lands," vol. I. In the "Old South Leaflets," No. 103, is an abstract of Louisiana Purchase documents in the offices of the departments of State and of the Treasury. "House Document No. 430, Fifty-Seventh Congress, Second Session," contains "State Papers and Correspondence bearing upon the Purchase of the Territory of Louisiana." Consult also J. D. Richardson's "Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents" (1896-99), "The Writings of Thomas Jefferson" (H. A. Washington's edition, 1853-4, and P. L. Ford's edition, 1892-99), and "The Writings of James Monroe" (S. M. Hamilton's edition, 1898-1903).

Of the many biographies of Jefferson, Henry S. Randall's three-volume "The Life of Thomas Jefferson" (1858) is still regarded as the standard work, notwithstanding the animus it displays against Hamilton and the Federalists. George Tucker's

"Life of Thomas Jefferson" (1837) is chiefly valuable as giving a Virginia view of the great Virginian, and as containing much information from local sources not found in other works. James Parton's "The Life of Thomas Jefferson" (1874) is more readable than either Randall's or Tucker's biography, but otherwise is not so satisfactory; and the same verdict must be rendered with respect to Thomas E. Watson's "Thomas Jefferson" (1903). However, in J. T. Morse, Jr.'s "Thomas Jefferson" (1883) we have a book by a modern biographer who, although censoriously critical, appreciates Jefferson's intense Americanism, and his real position as the master-mind in the Purchase of Louisiana. Another biography which, for all its sketchiness, deserves to be drawn to the student's attention is Henry C. Merwin's "Thomas Jefferson" (1901), published in the excellent "Riverside Biographical Series."

There are very few books dealing exclusively, or even primarily, with the acquisition of Florida, but among them is one that all future writers and investigators must reckon with. This is H. B. Fuller's "The Purchase of Florida" (1906), a work which, whatever may be thought of its conclusions, is indispensable for the compactness and thoroughness with

which it presents the evidence relating to its most intricate subject. Apart from Mr. Fuller's scholarly monograph, the student cannot do better than follow the narrative of events as given in the general histories of Henry Adams, James Schouler, and John B. McMaster, cited above. Adams, it should be noted, does not carry the story beyond 1817, but so far as he goes is more detailed than either Schouler or McMaster. The documentary evidence upon which all of these writers rely is contained largely in the "American State Papers—Foreign Relations," vol. IV, giving the official papers bearing on the diplomacy of the acquisition and the events of Jackson's second invasion of Florida. The documents relating to the revolution in West Florida and its occupation by the United States are in the third volume of the same invaluable compilation. Other material of importance is found in John Quincy Adams' "Memoirs" (1874-77), and in the writings of Madison and Monroe; also in Thomas Hart Benton's "Thirty Years' View" (1854-57), which contains, as was stated in the Florida chapter, Jackson's defense of his conduct.

For completeness, candor, and appreciation of historical values, none of the later biographies of Jackson can claim superiority to James Parton's

"Life of Andrew Jackson" (1860). Written in three massive volumes, each evidencing prolonged and careful research, Parton's monumental work appeals almost equally to the student whose sole interest is in getting at the facts, and to the reader chiefly concerned in finding the facts presented in an interesting way. Parton's one great fault, in the opinion of some critics, is an undue severity of judgment when weighing the words and deeds of his hero; and quite recently two large biographies have been written for the express purpose of compelling a more favorable opinion. These are A. S. Colyar's "Life and Times of Andrew Jackson; Soldier, Statesman, President" (1904), and A. C. Buell's "History of Andrew Jackson; Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President" (1904). Unfortunately, both show a pronounced tendency to hero-worship, and it would not be unfair to describe the Colyar biography, which is the work of a Tennessee lawyer, as an unusually elaborate piece of special pleading. Mr. Buell's book is better, being well written and rich in incident and anecdote. Other biographies possessing features that make them helpful are W. G. Sumner's "Andrew Jackson" (1899), which, by the way, is prefaced by a splenetic introduction from the pen of J. T. Morse, Jr., who

sees in Jackson little more than a demagogue succeeding because he pleased the multitude; Cyrus T. Brady's "The True Andrew Jackson" (1906), and William Garrott Brown's "Andrew Jackson" (1900). This last, although one of the smallest, is perhaps the best of the minor "lives" of Jackson, giving the essentials in a most attractive form and in a thoroughly judicial spirit.

The leading authority on the Texas Question is George P. Garrison, whose "Texas" (1902), "Westward Extension" (1906), and "The First Stage of the Movement for the Annexation of Texas" (in *The American Historical Review*, vol. X, pp. 72-96) contain the latest words of scientific historical investigation with regard to this ancient theme of controversy. It is not too much to say that Dr. Garrison has effectually disposed of the long prevalent idea that the acquisition of Texas was from first to last the work of the Southern "slavocracy." This idea colors and distorts the Texas sections of Hermann E. Von Holst's "Constitutional and Political History of the United States," vol. II (1879), and Professor Schouler's already mentioned "History of the United States of America under the Constitution," which are nevertheless extremely valuable. John B. McMaster's "History of the People of the United

States," vol. VI (1906), is especially helpful for the evidence it adduces showing how widespread was the enthusiasm aroused in the United States by the uprising of the Texans to win their independence. The most exhaustive treatment of the subject is found, however, in the Texas volume of H. H. Bancroft's "History of the Pacific States of North America" (1882-90), and with this should be studied Dudley G. Wooten's "Comprehensive History of Texas" (1898), which contains a reprint of Henderson Yoakum's "History of Texas from its First Settlement in 1685 to its Annexation by the United States in 1846." Anson Jones' "Memoranda and Official Correspondence relating to the Republic of Texas" (1859), is also valuable. Jones was the last President of Texas, and wrote from long and intimate knowledge of the country, in which he had been a resident since 1833. G. T. Fulmore's "The Annexation of Texas and the Mexican War" (in the Texas State Historical Association's *Quarterly*, vol. V, pp. 28-48) is a paper of corrective value as to the truth about annexation and slavery's connection with the early colonization of Texas. Another phase of Texas history is strikingly exhibited in J. L. Worley's "The Diplomatic Relations of England and the Republic of Texas" (in the Texas State His-

torical Association's *Quarterly*, vol. X, pp. 1-40). Contemporary opinion of the annexation movement, and the views entertained by the leaders for and against annexation, may be studied at first hand in such works as Thomas Hart Benton's "Thirty Years' View," John Quincy Adams' "Memoirs," and the writings and speeches of Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and John C. Calhoun.

Until Henry G. Bruce published his "Life of General Houston" (1891), there was nothing approaching an adequate biography of Houston. C. Edwards Lester's "Sam Houston and His Republic" (1846), and "Life and Achievements of Sam Houston, Hero and Statesman" (1883), were, and still are, useful, but require to be read with great critical caution. Particular interest attaches to the 1846 book, as having been written under the watchful eye of Houston himself, in his private room at the National Hotel in Washington. But it remained for Mr. Bruce to give us the first really worthy account of the character and career of the man who "made Texas." Since then another excellent biography has appeared in Alfred M. Williams' "Sam Houston and the War of Independence in Texas," although, strictly speaking, this is a history of the Texan War rather than a study of the great commander of the

**Texans.** Apart from these four books, there is really nothing with which the student of Houston's life need concern himself.

Coming to the literature on the occupation of Oregon, we are similarly confronted with the fact that there are comparatively few books upon which reliance may be placed. The best-known histories of Oregon — W. H. Gray's "A History of Oregon" (1870), and William Barrows' "Oregon" (1883) — are practically worthless, being written from a narrow, partizan point of view. It was in Gray's book that the Whitman legend was first formally foisted on the public, to survive to the present day despite the corrective evidence presented in Edward G. Bourne's "The Legend of Marcus Whitman" (in his "Essays in Historical Criticism," 1901), and William I. Marshall's "History vs. The Whitman Saved Oregon Story" (1904). To find a general work treating the Oregon Question fully, sanely, and without prejudice, it is necessary to turn to the "North-West Coast" and "Oregon" volumes of H. H. Bancroft's "History of the Pacific States of North America." Here every phase of the subject is examined in detail, and in the spirit of the true historical investigator. Gustavus Hines' "Oregon: Its History, Condition, and Prospects" (1851) has

defects similar to those of Gray and Barrows, but is interesting as a first-hand account of the experiences of one of the early settlers, Hines having gone to Oregon as early as 1839. Another early settler to place his experiences on paper is Peter H. Burnett, who, in his "Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer" (1880), gives a vivid account of life in both Oregon and California in the forties. It will also be well to read "The Oregon Trail" (edition of 1901), by Francis Parkman, the distinguished historian who took the long trail to the Oregon country in 1846. The diplomacy and legislation relating to Oregon may conveniently be studied in Bancroft's "Oregon" volumes, in Benton's "Thirty Years' View," in the general works on American diplomacy enumerated above, and in the writings of Webster and Calhoun, particularly vols. IX, XI, and XII of the "Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster" (1903), and vol. V of the "Works of John C. Calhoun" (1853-55).

There are three brief but useful biographies of Benton. Taken together, they afford a remarkably complete view of this great expansionist's personality and achievements. Theodore Roosevelt's "Thomas Hart Benton" (1887), prepared for the always informative "American Statesmen" series of

biographies, is an appreciative study written with its author's characteristic ease and vigor of expression. W. M. Meigs, in "The Life of Thomas Hart Benton" (1904), deals with his subject in an interesting, judicious, and sympathetic way. Joseph M. Rogers, in "Thomas H. Benton" (1905), is less scholarly and critical than either Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Meigs, but brings out with especial clearness Benton's fine idealism and the reasons for his long continued popularity with his constituents. In studying Benton as an expansionist it also is desirable to read the biographical sketch contributed by his daughter, Mrs. Fremont, to her husband's "Memoirs of My Life" (1887), a sketch devoted to an explanation of how Benton first became interested in the westward movement and his activities in connection therewith. Interesting glimpses of Benton are further revealed in Mrs. Fremont's "Souvenirs of my Time" (1887), a book worth reading even without reference to its historical interest.

The Mexican War may be studied in detail in the "Mexico," "California," and "Arizona and New Mexico" volumes of Bancroft's stupendous work; or, more briefly, in Professor Schouler's "History of the United States of America under the constitution," and George P. Garrison's "Westward

Extension," which serves as a useful corrective to Professor Schouler's insistence on the "wolf and lamb" point of view. Charles H. Owen's "The Justice of the Mexican War" (1908) goes to the opposite extreme, but contains material not readily accessible elsewhere, and should by no means be overlooked. Among earlier books W. W. Jay's "A Review of the Causes and Consequences of the Mexican War" (1849) still repays perusal, notwithstanding its author's extreme partizanship. A. A. Livermore's "The War with Mexico Reviewed" (1850) gives a good idea of the contemporaneous differences of opinion regarding the war. The military operations are well described in R. S. Ripley's "The War with Mexico," but see also U. S. Grant's "Personal Memoirs" (1885-86), Marcus J. Wright's "General Scott" (1894), and O. O. Howard's "General Taylor" (1892).

Bancroft is again the leading authority when we pass to the literature having to do with the conquest of California, the subject being exhaustively examined in the "California" volumes of his "History of the Pacific States of North America." In the opinion of the present writer, however, he is scarcely fair in his treatment of Fremont and the Bear Flag revolutionists, and the same criticism

applies to Theodore H. Hittell's four-volume "History of California" (1886-1897), and Josiah Royce's "California" (1886). Nevertheless, Bancroft, Hittell, and Royce are indispensable to the student, each making distinct contributions to our knowledge of the events of the conquest. Dr. Garrison's "Westward Extension" is also useful, although far less space is devoted to the winning of California than to the annexation of Texas. Other material of importance is found in works devoted primarily to a recital of the achievements of Fremont, such as Charles W. Upham's "Life, Explorations, and Public Services of John Charles Fremont" (1856), John Bigelow's "Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John C. Fremont" (1856), and S. M. Smucker's "Life of Fremont" (1856).

The reader must bear in mind, however, that if the tendency among later historians is unduly to minimize Fremont's share in the conquest of California, these earlier writers exaggerate it. Yet we must go back to them for a biography, as no modern work has appeared to supersede them. For a similar reason, so far as knowledge of Fremont's explorations is concerned we are mainly dependent on Fremont's own account, as given in his "Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in

the Year 1842, and to Oregon and California in the Years 1843-44." This was first issued in 1845 as a Government publication, but the following year was brought out in the usual way by a New York publishing house, and rapidly passed into several editions. It is a work not merely of autobiographical but of distinct geographical and historical usefulness, and is among the most important of early books on the far West. Fremont's "Memoirs of My Life," published more than forty years later, is likewise deserving of study, together with Mrs. Fremont's already mentioned "Souvenirs of my Time."

There is no single work affording a complete account of the Alaska Purchase; and, indeed, as stated in the text, such an account is nowhere to be had, since the seal of secrecy has not been altogether removed even at this late day. But a sufficiently clear understanding is possible with the aid of certain books and documents, among which the most important are John Bassett Moore's "A Digest of International Law" (1906), "Proceedings of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal" (1903), published as "Senate Document No. 162, Fifty-Eighth Congress, Second Session"; the "Alaska" volume of H. H. Bancroft's "History of the Pacific States of North America," Frederic Bancroft's "William H. Seward"

(1900), Frederick W. Seward's "Seward at Washington, as Senator and Secretary of State" (1891), E. L. Pierce's "Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner" (1877-93), and "The Works of Charles Sumner" (1870-83).

Professor Moore's "A Digest of International Law" was started as a revision of Wharton's "Digest," but is practically a new work, and no student of American foreign policy can afford to be without it. Its Alaska material is contained chiefly in vols. I, III, and V; but consult the index. Frederick W. Seward's "Seward at Washington" derives its value from the fact that the author was closely associated with his father during the later years of Seward's public life. Frederic Bancroft's "William H. Seward," in addition to throwing new light on the Alaska treaty, is far and away the best biography of Seward that has yet been written. In fact, it is one of the best among American historical biographies. T. H. Lothrop's "William Henry Seward" is briefer and less searching, and contains uncommonly little about the Alaska Purchase, but is useful for those who lack the time or the opportunity to use the larger works. Biographical material of the greatest value is also available in "The Life of William H. Seward, with Selections from his Works" (1855), edited by

George E. Baker; and in Mr. Baker's edition of "The Works of William Henry Seward" (1853-84).

The war with Spain and the acquisition of oversea possessions have already been productive of an extensive literature. H. H. Bancroft's "The New Pacific" (1900) goes into both subjects in considerable detail, taking a comprehensive and careful survey of the insular acquisitions in Pacific waters, and examining the resources of the countries bordering on the Pacific. A. R. Colquhoun's "Greater America" is again useful in this connection. For an entertaining as well as informative work, the student should procure Harry Thurston Peck's "Twenty Years of the Republic" (1906), written by a man who possesses a keen appreciation of the influence of the personal factor in the making of history. C. H. Forbes-Lindsay's "America's Insular Possessions" (1906) deals in turn with each island dependency, describing the people, customs, industries, commerce, etc., of each. Henry Cabot Lodge's "The War with Spain" (1900) is both thoughtful and interesting, and is valuable as showing how the war impressed a statesman who was actively concerned in its prosecution. For a similar reason reference should be made to R. A. Alger's "The War with Spain" (1901), and J. D. Long's "The New Ameri-

can Navy" (1903), the one written by the Secretary of War and the other by the Secretary of the Navy in the war administration. A. T. Mahan's "Lessons of the War with Spain" (1899) is especially significant because its author was a member of the naval advisory board during the war. The anti-imperialist view is presented in numerous publications, among which may be mentioned G. F. Hoar's "No Power to Conquer Foreign Nations and Hold their People in Subjection against their Will" (1899), and Edward Atkinson's "The Cost of War and Warfare from 1898 to 1904" (1904). W. F. Willoughby's "Territories and Dependencies of the United States" (1905) gives an excellent account of the measures adopted for the administration of the various insular possessions. For more detailed study the reader may consult the various official documents cited in the preceding chapter.

A satisfactory biography of William McKinley has yet to be written. Among existing works the most useful, though almost devoid of literary merit, is A. E. Corning's "William McKinley" (1907). Mr. Corning himself describes his work as "a portrayal of William McKinley not so much in a historical sense as in that of his personality." Murat Halstead's "The Illustrious Life of William McKinley our Mar-

tyred President" (1901) is, as its title indicates, a flamboyant production. Charles H. Grosvenor's "William McKinley, His Life and Work" (1901) is not a biography but a compilation, made up of newspaper editorials, tributes from Governors of States, eulogies from other sources, and various odds and ends. Far better than any of these is John Hay's "Memorial Address on the Life and Character of William McKinley," delivered before Congress, February 22, 1902. See also the "Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley from March 1, 1897, to May 30, 1900" (1900).



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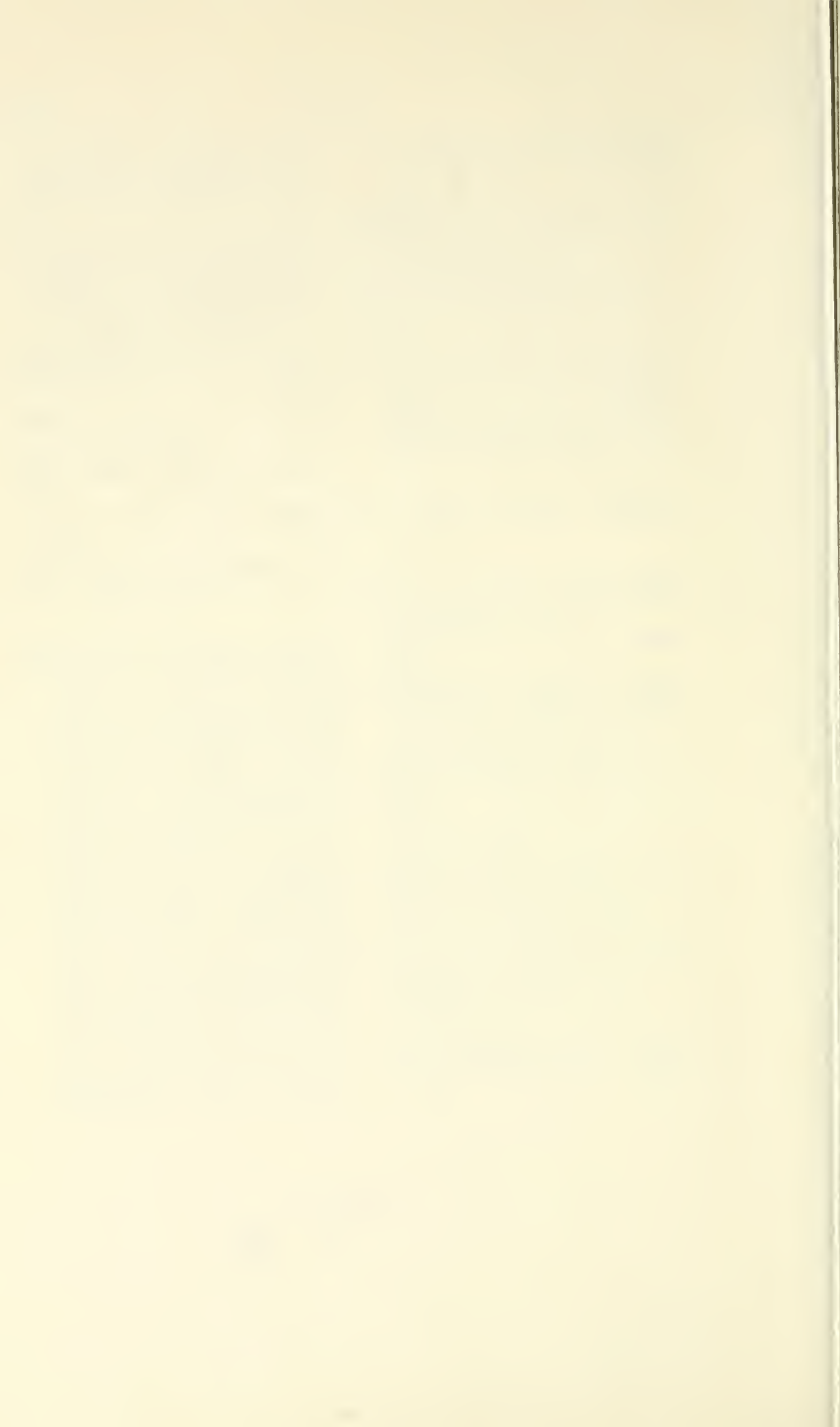
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